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P. 905 A

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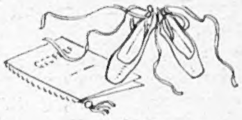

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The Sketch

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 27, 1954.

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MISS RACHEL CECIL

An early March wedding at her parents' home is planned by Miss Rachel Cecil, elder daughter of Commander the Hon. H. M. A. Cecil, R.N. (retd.), and the Hon. Mrs. Cecil, of Greenoaks, Bishop's Waltham, Hampshire. Her fiancé, Major Mortimer ("Tim") Lanyon, M.C., R.A., who is at present serving in Germany, is the elder son of Major and Mrs. L. F. Lanyon, of Hambledon House, Hambledon, Hampshire. *(From the painting by Richard Marientreu.)*

Latest Royal portrait to be released : H.M. the Queen and H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh sat for this portrait by Baron before leaving on their present tour. Her Majesty is wearing an evening gown of yellow tulle decorated with sprays of mimosa, and with it she wears the blue Ribbon and Star of the Garter. Her necklace was a wedding present from the Nizam of Hyderabad and her tiara a wedding present from Queen Mary. His Royal Highness is wearing the uniform of Admiral of the Fleet.

Our Motley Notes

BY THE JESTER

(Deputising for Toby O'Brien)

THE twenty-fifth birthday party of *The Listener*, which was held at the Dorchester on January 14th, was in some ways a curiously old-fashioned occasion, I thought; elsewhere it has been compared to a Victorian *soirée*. At twenty-one, I have no doubt, *The Listener* kicked up its heels amongst its own close friends, and went out to paint the town; I like to imagine its editorial staff, in opera-hats and cloaks with red silk linings, being coaxed down from lamp-posts by a fatherly constable. But twenty-five is a very respectable age. The eight hundred or so guests, of various degrees of eminence, conversed agreeably, made their individual tours of the room, and were Entertained for an hour by a talented group of artists, engaged for the occasion. These appeared discreetly from an inner room (where, perhaps, a Cold Collation had been set out for them), and two of them at least had selected their material with a nice sense of period. Mr. Colin Horsley, that talented young New Zealander, ran through the range of the Victorian after-dinner pianist, playing Chopin with a delicate tenderness, and some loud Lizst. And Mr. Walter Midgeley, moustache-less for the occasion, was a drawing-room tenor ten times larger than life.

Mr. Naunton Wayne, however, a deft raconteur, stood outside period. His stories on this occasion ranged from the Shaggy Dog—the tale, in immense detail, of the man who bought a hole, dug it up, lost it from the back of his lorry in a rough country lane, and, in returning to look for it, fell in and was never seen again—through the Felicitous Story—the one about the attendant who was given a holiday at his own Convenience—right down (or should it be up ?) to the Tall Story. This was about the time he went shooting with a friend. He borrowed a gun from the neighbouring farmer, choosing a time when the man was out feeding the pigs. Both barrels were filled with rust, but they thought it would serve, and went on until they came to a stream. Upstream was a herd of duck, downstream a flock of snipe, and, when they got out into midstream, a pheasant flew straight overhead. So Mr. Wayne aimed his gun straight up into the air, and pulled the trigger.

Both barrels burst. The explosion from the right barrel slaughtered the herd of duck, that from the left quartered the flock of snipe, and the kick from the gun sent Mr. Wayne straight down through the bottom of the boat, and he came up with his pockets full of trout. Best day's sport he ever had, he says.

On leaving the *soirée*, we were given copies of the birthday issue of *The Listener*, and a weighty three-penn'orth it is, with articles by Shaw on St. Joan, Sir Max Beerbohm on the Music Hall giants of his youth, and a survey of the course of the detective-story since Sherlock Holmes, that prompted me to make some enquiries of my own. What has happened, I wondered, to the Master's rooms in Baker Street, now that Exhibition Year is over.

There never has been complete agreement over the site of the rooms. During last summer, Mr. J. E. Holroyd, of the Board of Trade, the president of the London Sherlock Holmes Society, led

an expedition to look over eight possible places, but its members eventually adjourned to a café without coming to any decision. He himself believes the present 109, Baker Street, to be the site of "221B," but, in the event, it was the Abbey National Building Society at 215, Baker Street, who, in 1951, lent a room in their offices to be refurbished in exact duplication of Holmes's study.

Only for that year was the hand of Commerce stayed. If you should visit Abbey House to-day, you will find the study given up to book-keeping again. As for its contents, they travelled to New York for re-exhibition, and are now in store. Even letters for Sherlock Holmes no longer arrive at the old address: "We haven't had one for ever so long," I was told. So, as the last of Holmes' correspondents are killed off, destroyed remorselessly in complicated ways by the very fiends against whom they implored his aid, the old fame dies, and a new generation of correspondents in need of help addresses its letters instead to Mrs. Dale.

EVERY year, under the ægis of the English-Speaking Union, between twenty to thirty American boys visit this country for a year's schooling, and a similar party of English boys goes the other way. Schools on both sides of the Atlantic offer free tuition and board for a year in the interests of Anglo-American understanding; their passages and pocket-money must be found by the boys' parents, and the Treasury makes a special allowance of £105 for our boys to take over—a pitifully small amount when turned into dollars, but American hospitality is traditional. Harrow, Rugby, Shrewsbury—indeed, almost all of the major public schools and many others—have taken American boys for a year at various times under this scheme, Eton being the only major exception.

Most of the boys come from the east coast of America, where the "prep" schools correspond to our public schools (their "public" schools are quite another matter), though there is often a boy from Harvard School in California; Harvard School is not to be confused with Harvard College, and is only there to make things difficult for the English. The boys go into the sixth forms, and tend to work most in Literature and History ("because we want to know more about you"); they usually enjoy more privileges in the form of week-end leaves than their schoolmates can command.

I was able to have a word with Tom Lumbard, a pleasant, bespectacled young man from Pomfret School in Connecticut, who is now at Sutton Valence. Used to "Spot Quizzes" and "true/false" questionnaires, it has taken him a little time to adjust to new methods of working; he still doesn't know, he says, what his grades are. He has been taught to play Rugger, and likes it; he thinks it a better *game* than American football. "So you prefer it?" I asked. "No," he said, "I prefer American football." It seems, too, that Sutton Valence doesn't have dances once a month, as they did at Pomfret. Indeed, Tom has only had one date since he 's been in England. I asked him where he had spent the Christmas holidays. "Paris," he said, "and Cologne and Switzerland. Some of the fellers have been in every European country except Monaco."

A MORE recent activity of the English-Speaking Union is the series of debates, which began last September. These are held in Dartmouth House; it is intended to have perhaps fifteen a year, divided between full-dress formal affairs in the ballroom, and informal debates for the younger members. President of the Debating Society is Charles Gibbs-Smith, who wrote *Operation Caroline*, and the Clerk is Ivan Yates, a recent ex-President of the Oxford Union, who is at present "nursing" the constituency of St. Marylebone. These are the only two officers, but there will be more when the Society can get around to holding some elections.

Procedure is very similar to that of the Oxford Union. Motions on serious subjects (last Thursday Christopher Mayhew and Ian Harvey were the Society's guests at a debate on Commercial Television) alternate with more flippant ones. There are four speeches, each of fifteen minutes, on the paper, after which the debate is thrown open, and has so far never failed to be carried on with verve and determination. The Oxford "Union manner," Mr. Yates observes with regret, has *not* so far been taken by speakers as a model; they are often more forthright than urbane.

The Tribulations of Tanya

By Anna Zinkeisen and Laurel Pascal

The Lord Tregennis threw a party.
His guests were smooth, or svelte, or hearty.
Except for one whose name was Smee—
And it was Smee looked after me.

INCIDENTAL INTELLIGENCE: Here is a comic sidelight on recent Hollywood matrimonial tangles in Italy. A certain popular newspaper has two telephone booths at one end of its News Room, and in these, two star reporters, neither of whom could speak a word of Italian, were hopelessly enmeshed in trunk calls to the scene of the love-birds' quarrel. After half-an-hour, both emerged at once from their booths, purple-faced and crying: "Thank God! At last I 've found someone who can speak English." A harassed Exchange had connected them with each other.

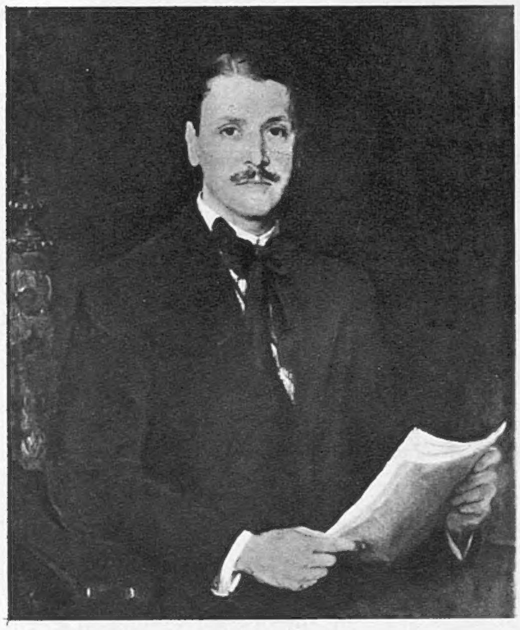
The other day a friend of mine formed one of the crowd watching the display window of a firm specialising in the manufacture of typewriters. In this window a card read: "This is a sample of the way in which our machine works." The message contained three gross typing errors.

At a recent Private View, not the least delightful of the pictures was a *tableau vivant*. In the centre of the main *salon*, surrounded by pictures, an industrious young man on a step-ladder polished the leaves of a gigantic aspidistra with olive oil. Later, I told this to a young lady of my acquaintance, who was not amused. "Of course," she said, "we do it at home. It 's good for them."

LANGUAGE is always changing; it is subject to so many social pressures. This is especially true of the language of a coterie; as soon as outsiders know the secret words, the words must be changed. Bop talk—the language of hep cats—is a classic case, because the vocabulary is so small. To understand "bop jokes," which, in the United States, have largely replaced Shaggy Dog stories in the popular favour, you do not need to be an initiate, however. All sentences are prefaced with the word "Man," used in the vocative case. (Though real cats may say "Dad" instead. Bop talk is the only form of English to have the equivalent of the French *tu-toiment*; "Daddy-O" is used on formal occasions, "Dad" to one's intimates.) Then you have to remember that the verb "to dig" means "to appreciate," and there are various adjectives of commendation—"cool," "gone" and crazy" are used in ascending order, though I hear that in California "nervous" has replaced "crazy," and "cool" has already become *démodé*.

The jokes all deal with misunderstanding in terms of understatement. "Man," says the cat, looking at the Statue of Liberty, "Dig that crazy Ronson." They have a certain sameness after a while, but you may be interested in the story of the two hep-cats who were lost in the snow in the St. Bernard Pass. Night was coming on. It seemed to them that they had no hope of survival, and that the only thing left for them was to face death with resignation and a cheerful courage. So they snuggled deep into the snow in the accepted way, set their upper lips stiffly, and prepared to wait for Death in comfort.

Suddenly, as you might expect, there hove into view at the top of the Pass a large St. Bernard dog, carrying a little barrel of brandy round its neck. "Ah," said one hep cat to the other, "At last, the Friend of Man!" "Yeah," said the other. "And dig that crazy dog with it."



The four portraits reproduced here are some of the many painted by Sir Gerald Kelly during his long friendship with Somerset Maugham, whom he first portrayed on canvas in 1907.

Somerset Maugham as a Novelist

An Appreciation for his Eightieth Birthday

by G. B. Stern

IF the novels of Mr. Somerset Maugham were just appearing and I had them to review, I doubt if I should experience the same pleasure and even excitement as while recently re-reading them, having absented myself from felicity long enough to make discoveries. Some readers, ardent but impatient, will say: "Oh, I always skip the preface to a book!"; they would be wrong in the case of the new prefaces to this handsome edition celebrating his eightieth birthday; they are full of meat:

> *I had been struck by the notion that the veneration to which an author full of years and honours is exposed must be irksome to the little alert soul within him which is still alive to the adventures of his fancy. Many odd and disconcerting ideas must cross his mind, I thought, while he maintains the dignified exterior that his admirers demand of him.*

It is generally agreed that among his novels, *Of Human Bondage* ranks already as a "classic" (whatever that may mean? The dictionary offers: "great; pure; correct; refined"). And no one could dispute that Mildred, cold and common, with her greenish skin, is a classic example of sheer wickedness. *The Moon and Sixpence* may still perhaps be counted as the most popular; *Cakes and Ale* he has mentioned as his own preference. While liking to be "different" if at the same time I can retain honesty, I should name *The Painted Veil* as my own first favourite—an effective title might well have been "*The Dog It Was*"—and next *Cakes and Ale*, with *The Narrow Corner* as at least deserving a place among the best three.

An idiosyncrasy which a writer—maybe also a painter or musician—often does not realise till pointed out to him is how one particular motif apparently lodged in his system gets repeated in different guise, a gate-crasher that refuses to be snubbed. Thus it may be noticed that over and over again Somerset Maugham ardently refers to the power and religion of beauty:

> *It meant to him (Stroeve) what God means to the believer, and when he saw it he was afraid.*
>
> *It seemed to her (Kitty) as though her body were a shell that lay at her feet and she pure spirit. Here was Beauty. She took it as the believer takes in his mouth the wafer which is God.*

And furthermore the author nearly always makes his articulate characters, immoral or amoral, eager to appreciate and comment on any outstandingly good character in the book; in *The Narrow Corner*, Dr. Saunders perceives not alone the pure and startling quality of Erik's goodness, but also that Fred Blake was struck all of a heap by it:

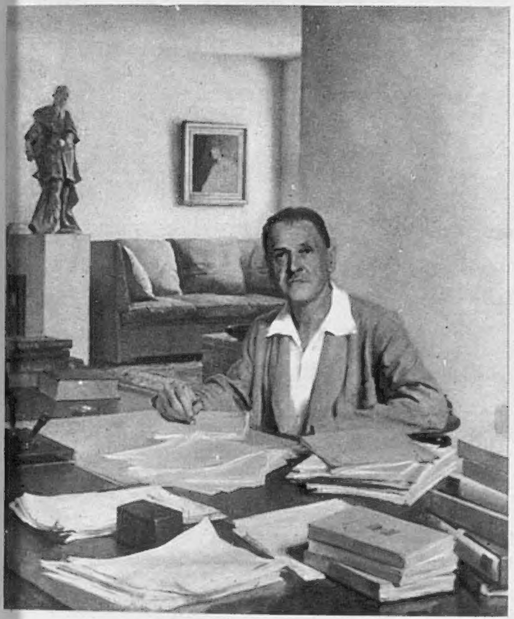
> *. . . the shock of admiration the lad had received when he was confronted with the realisation of something quite startling. . . . You might have thought Erik a trifle absurd . . . but there was no doubt about it, he had, heaven only knew by what accident of nature, a real and simple goodness. It was specific. It was absolute . . .*

And in *The Painted Veil*, Kitty, a cheap little voluptuary, suffers a change of heart when she compares her frivolous third-rate social ambitions with the simple selflessness of the nuns nursing the plague at Mei-tan-fu. As for her husband:

> *she thought suddenly of an instrument she had been shown in Hong Kong upon which a needle oscillated a little and she had been told that this represented an earthquake a thousand miles away in which perhaps a thousand persons had lost their lives.*

I should choose this inscrutable Walter Fane as the most intensely interesting of all Somerset Maugham's male characters; perhaps one might go as far as to say the most heroic, his quality unmarred by tiresome self-pity; the poignant irony that he and not his wife should die of the plague makes one of the great death-scenes in fiction.

And here is yet another of Mr. Maugham's repetitive themes: Kitty in *The Painted Veil*, Strickland in *The Moon and Sixpence*, Rosie, the heroine of *Cakes and Ale*, each seeks a catharsis by plunging just once again into indulgence of the flesh after they have imagined they had nobly renounced it. . . . And then emerges released, creative, cured of sorrow . . . Rosie is indubitably his most attractive woman; he admits it himself; a warm-hearted, generous, irresistibly human creature, nobody would deny her the first place in his gallery of engaging rogues; though not quite in the sense Meredith uses the word of Clara Middleton: "a dainty rogue in porcelain." Julia Lambert, too, undoubtedly goes into the Rogues' Gallery; and with the author of *Theatre* we can laugh at her swift and



resourceful devices to extricate herself from trouble, and share his refusal to be pompous about her foibles :

> *I may add that for my part I feel a great affection for her ; I am not shocked by her naughtiness, nor scandalised by her absurdities ; I can only consider her, whatever she does, with fond indulgence.*

Captain Nichols, in *The Narrow Corner*, goes beyond the engaging stage of roguery ; fictionally speaking, he is all a wonder and a wild delight : he cheats, he lies, he thieves, he murders, he is complacent and vindictive, he does not even know when he is disgusting and altogether horrible ; and yet he shows one redeeming quality, from which we can gauge Mr. Maugham's respect for a man who knows his job :

> *He seemed to take pleasure in his mastery of the little boat he managed with such confident skill ; it was in his hands like a horse in a horseman's when he knows every trick and habit it has.*

Somerset Maugham's taste for sober facts soberly phrased alternates with the robust, indeed the Rabelaisian, humour by which he views his characters and reports their speeches. For nearly always he must have a reporter present in his stories, a compère, a spectator, whatever you please. This sophisticated, dispassionate narrator is, more often than not, himself ; though he allows Dr. Saunders to deputise for him in *The Narrow Corner*. *Of Human Bondage* being largely autobiographical, paradoxically does not require the presence of the first person singular ; nor does he materialise in *Theatre*, nor in *The Painted Veil* ; but in *The Razor's Edge*, as in *Cakes and Ale* and *The Moon and Sixpence*—" I boldly used my own name and made myself one of the characters that take part in the action."

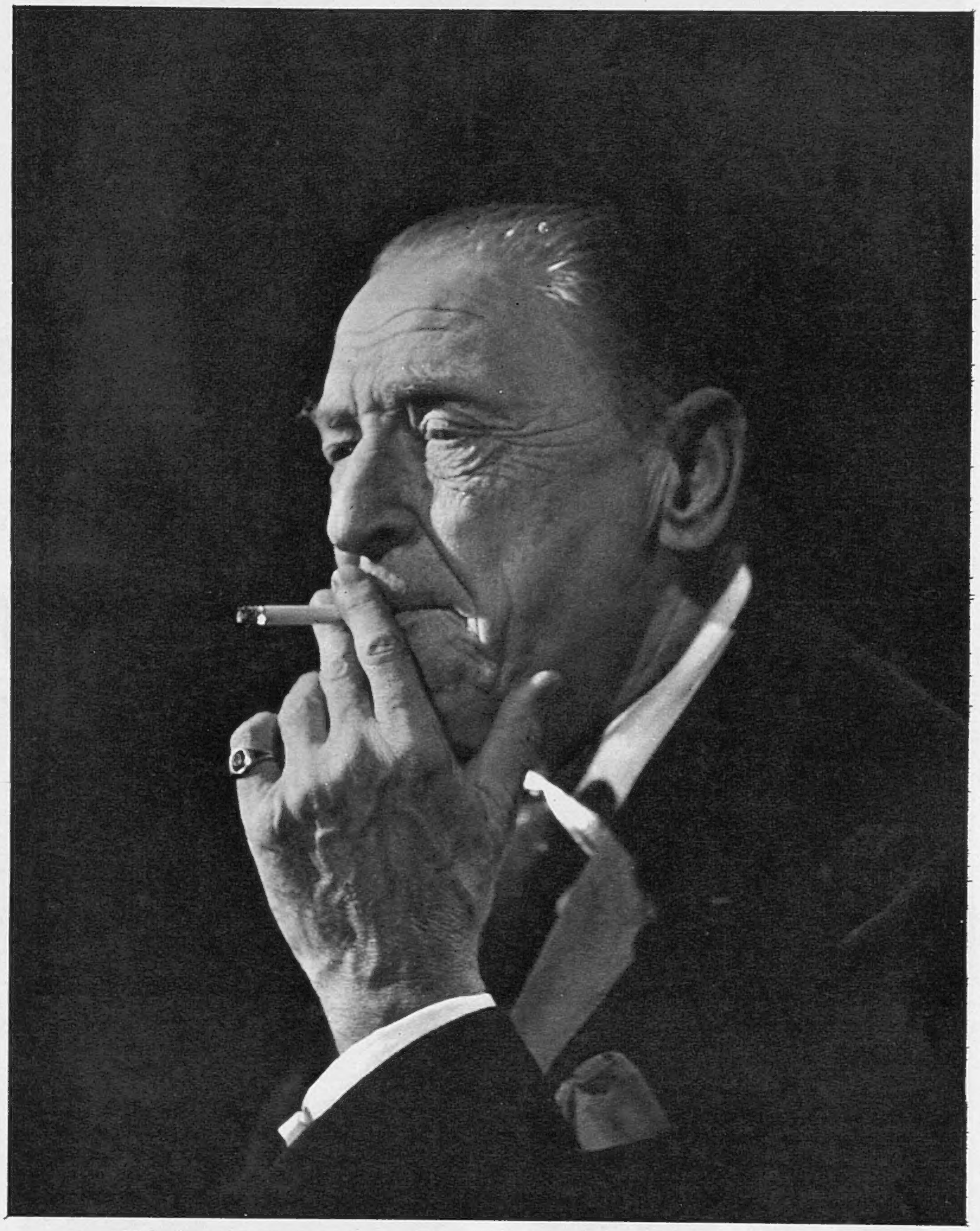
The Moon and Sixpence, that beanfeast of cynicism, I like least of his novels ; not, I hope, because I am too squeamish to swallow its brutal realism, nor wish the artist sentimentalised ; but because I prefer Gauguin's legacy of glorious pictures without having to contemplate the mangled bodies of human sacrifice still smoking in front of them. Perhaps one may also suspect the author of wanting us to accept the colossal scale of Strickland's ingratitude and cruelty (not to mention his bad manners) on a " special plea " for the requirements of his genius.

The account of his last years in Tahiti is curiously moving ; one can feel more compassion for Strickland the leper than for the earlier gee-but-he's-tough Strickland. But may not the anti-climax right at the end be a shade too deliberately conceived, when from the heights of tragedy and horror we are bumped down, so to speak, by a remark about the author's Uncle Harry remembering the days " when you could get thirteen Royal Natives for a shilling " ?

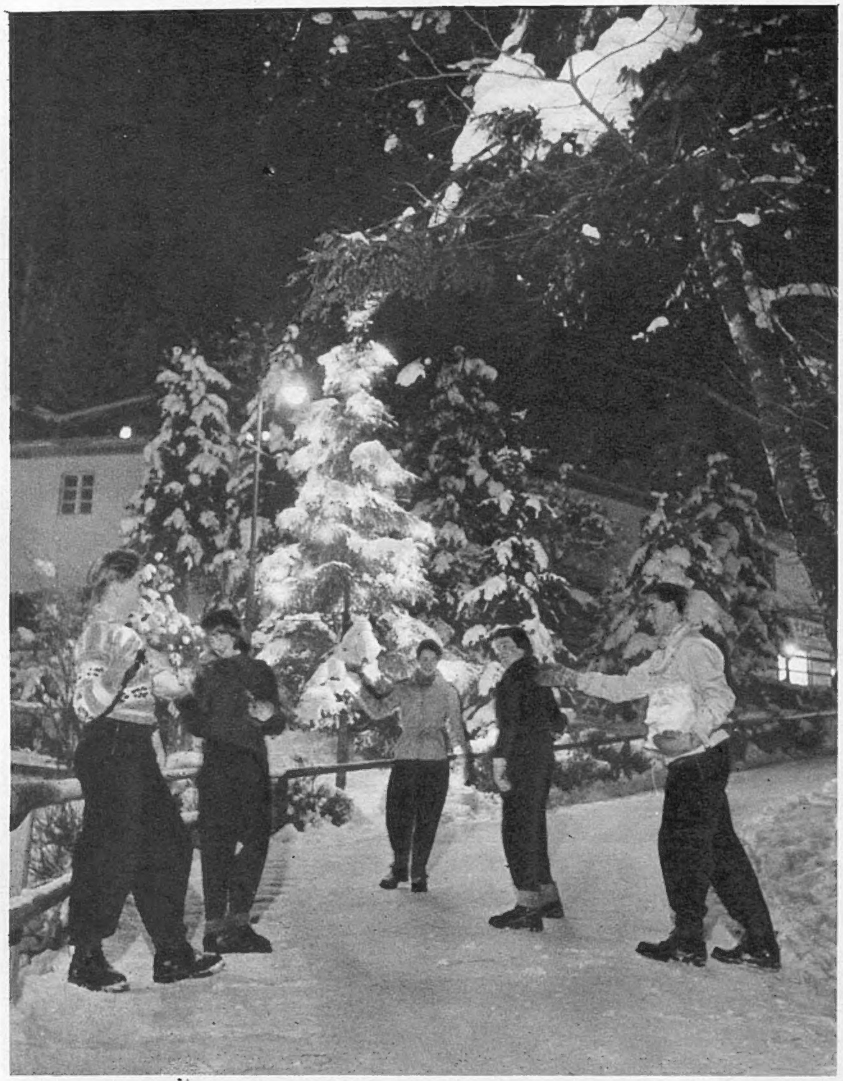
The writer who was then young enough to be pleased at giving his readers that type of galvanic shock was to use the same formula but with a far more subtle and mature technique many years later, in the concluding words of *Christmas Holiday* : the cheerful, ingenuous son of a respectable middle-class family is back again with his father and mother and sister after his nightmare adventures in Paris, when he had been away for the first time on his own :

> *It was a fact that he had done nothing ; his father thought he had had a devil of a time and was afraid he had contracted venereal disease, and he hadn't even had a woman ; only one thing had happened to him . . . the bottom had fallen out of his world.*

And yet why, in the name of St. Carp and St. Cavil, should *The Moon and Sixpence* be the only one of all the Maugham novels that provokes my strong desire to review it as though it were published but yesterday ? The answer may be that in this memorable week of his four-score years of literary achievement (supposing it to have begun in his cradle) one feels a certain diffidence in pouring out nothing but libations to a master teller-of-tales whose palate so distinctly prefers salt and mustard to an abundance of honey-mead.



This fine photographic study of Somerset Maugham was made very recently by Baron at his London studios.



Guests at a Badgastein hotel have fun in the snow, with a fairy-story Christmas tree as a background. During the recent snow famine, Badgastein was one of the few resorts blessed with sufficient snow for sports purposes.

English visitors admiring the view in the late afternoon sunshine from a hotel garden overlooking the picturesque Badgastein valley.

Winter Sports at Badgastein

Heavy snowfalls around Badgastein at a time when most winter resorts were ruefully "enjoying" warm, spring-like weather tempted our photographer to make the twenty-seven-hour journey from London to this picturesque Austrian spa. At the Bellevue, one of the hundred or more hotels in Badgastein, he found enthusiastic winter-sporters delighted at the ideal conditions prevailing, and hoteliers hoping the weather would be equally satisfactory for the British Army Ski-ing Championship later in the season. Since then, unfortunately, the freak weather has brought disaster, and the Alps have been subject to the most appalling series of avalanches in this region for many years.

Photographed for "THE SKETCH" by George Konig.

Exchanging congratulations after the ski-school race are Mr. David Melford, Miss Pat Atwood, Miss Ann Powell and Mr. Richard Fort.

"Blowing his own trumpet" is fancy-dress competition winner John Clark, with Miss Claire Mary Pedder and Miss Fidelia Fogg.

Mr. Bingham Dore, Miss Josephine Keliher and Mr. William Billigheimer admiring the view from the top of the Stubnerkogel railway.

Guests at a start-of-season cocktail party: 2nd Lieut. Norman Harrison, Miss Josephine Keliher, Lieut. Nicholas Leadsom and Miss Lee Scowen, of Montreal. The two young Army officers, who both serve with the Lancashire Fusiliers, were on leave from Trieste.

Five enthusiasts here demonstrating their theories on ski-running are Bdr. Michael Jeal, R.H.A., of Croydon, Miss Tony Shennan, of Liverpool, Gnr. David Blaxall, R.H.A., of Brentwood, Miss Caroline Billigheimer, of Kent, and Gnr. Richard Avery, R.H.A., of St. Andrews.

Waiting for the starter's orders is Miss Naomi Keanie, of Scotland.

Miss Christine Bennett, of Cambridge, ties Miss Paddy Farrar's race number.

Mr. D. Sebag-Montefiore shows his daughter Susan the starting-point.

"Sauce for the goose": It's lots of fun for the onlookers as well when ski-ing student Miss Claire Newton gives Chief Ski Instructor Herr Heinrich Zehntner a lesson in the intricacies of the Scottish reel.

Proud of his newly-acquired Tyrolean hat is Mr. James Bruxner, here being teased for refusing to take it off by Miss Deborah Brooke, Miss Margaret Harvey and Mr. John Chaplin.

Miss Frances Waddington demonstrates the "snow-plough" position to fellow Oxford-Cambridge learners Misses Janifred Waller, Deborah Brooke, Angela Williams, Ruth Woodburne, Claire Newton, Hermione Hanbury-Sparrow, Elizabeth Wallace and Margaret Vernon.

The "dark blues" give vent to loud jubilation as the scoreboard is held aloft by Mr. Bingham Dore, of the Ski Club of Great Britain: he organised this Oxford-Cambridge ski race in fancy dress, and also acted as timekeeper and judge.

Our Bookshelf

THE ALDERMAN'S SON. By Gerald Bullett. (*Michael Joseph ; 12s. 6d.*)

THE BLOSSOMING TREE. By Betty Askwith. (*Victor Gollancz, Ltd. ; 10s. 6d.*)

GEORGE ELIOT. By Robert Speaight. (*Arthur Barker, Ltd. ; 7s. 6d.*)

Reviewed by G. B. Stern

IN a previous issue of *The Sketch*, Mr. J. C. Trewin gave us a brief review of Gerald Bullett's novel, *The Alderman's Son*, apologising quite unnecessarily for poaching on my preserves. I propose, however, to do a bit of re-poaching, for I found the book more absorbing than he did, and will now happily proceed to disagree with him on almost every point.

To cut off the eye's inevitable lifelong associations with Shakespeare, an evocation too powerful to resist, Mr. Bullett has used the old spelling, and thus we may start afresh with the story of the child and the schoolboy as though we knew nothing of his marvellous future. Fiction when truly founded on reality is somehow always more enthralling than demi-fiction, though, of course, it is difficult for us who have not delved as deep into research as Mr. Bullett, to judge exactly where fact does fringe off into fiction ; yet so few facts are positively known about Will Shakespeare's early life that the author's imagination has free pasture for its roaming.

His feeling for the homespun no less than for the velvet and brocade of the sixteenth century, ensure that the household and family of Alderman John Shaxper are not mere romantic puppets ; they live and speak and think and act as though the barriers between " historical " and " now " are negligible. For instance, at the start of the book, where, with her serving-man, her baby Will and little Dorothy Gethen, Mistress Mary Shaxper has to escape from the outbreak of plague at Stratford, and go as a supplicant for the hospitality of her cousin, Sir Peter Quinbury, of Chinnor Park, a long and perilous journey—were not her doubts of the welcome they might or might not receive on their arrival, comparable in all essentials with the psychology of refugees in recent wars ?

The scene of young William's entry to Stratford Grammar School is brilliantly conceived ; and so is a delightful idyll of the Golden Age of childhood, where with his younger brother Gilbert and his friend Dick Bassett, William secretly diverts a brook so that the water may fill two gravel-pits and create an ocean to play with. On the other hand, an account of the Queen's visit to Warwick, the speeches made in extravagant worship of " *a gaunt, regal, manly woman heavily bejewelled,*" the elaborate formalities when the Bailiff offered her the gift of twenty golden sovereigns (she was awfully pleased really, but pretended she would have given them back only it might hurt their feelings !) are obviously built up from existing records and therefore somewhat pedestrian, lacking the greater authenticity of inspired invention ; such as when William was taken to see the company of Players who had come trumpeting into the town, and after the miming, a wildly excited youngster eluded his father and followed glamour into the tap-room.

" By gazing fed " . . . Throughout his earlier years, William is shown as swiftly responsive to every fresh sight and sensation as though it were a coin new-minted. And if we have wondered—and indeed who has not ?—how Shakespeare's multitudinous characters had been engendered in the mind of a boy in Stratford, how begot, how nourishéd, it is fascinating to recognise here among his chance encounters the originals of Malvolio, of old Corin the shepherd, of Hugh Evans, and of a hundred other familiars.

The last half of the book, presenting William as a young man in love, is not quite as felicitous ; maybe we would have been glad to leave him at fifteen, dazed with surprise and thrilled with happiness when he first saw a poem of his own " *elegantly inscribed in parchment* " by an older friend, Richard Field, one day to be his printer :

> *The same poem, yet how different its look, how much more real. For from that moment it seemed to have a life and reality of its own . . . and he marvelled to find himself the parent of so fair a child.*

THE same paradox is manifest in Miss Betty Askwith's novel, *The Blossoming Tree*, that wherever she supports her story by introducing actual contemporary persons, anecdotes and encounters—the Dreyfus case, Byron in attendance on Caro Lamb, our heroine's meeting with Anatole France (though rather fun where he pinches her under cover of their formal farewell !)—it seems for a moment to destroy reality instead of enhancing it ; as though already at the beginning of the century, Time Marches On were suddenly flashed on a screen, needlessly to emphasize that this is a period piece. For it is pre-eminently a love-story ; the love-scenes between Andrei and Catherine are charming, meaning that they really and truly charm the reader into a lulled acceptance of their halcyon days in Paris, after Catherine has at last, so to speak, plumped for the savour of life instead of its respectabilities.

The book starts in modern times with a sentence that quickens attention like the opening of any of Jane Austen's novels, as direct and uncircumstantial : " *Lady Henry Vanroyne's granddaughter, Elizabeth, found the visit very dull.*" Presently we are drawn back to the girlhood of Elizabeth's grandmother, why she married the excellent conscientious politician, Lord Henry Vanroyne, and—a most astonishing sequel—why she stayed with him.

Apart from the attractions of place and story, *The Blossoming Tree*, although not illustrated, is full of unforgettable pictures.

MR. ROBERT SPEAIGHT, in addition to the astonishing variety of his talents, includes a somewhat rare gift for quotation, or perhaps I should say for selecting the right quotations ; his contribution to the excellent series of English Novelists has left me surprised at the sheer quality of George Eliot's novels ; how could one not have been struck, hitherto, by these succinct passages of humour, of tolerance or knowledge of the heart ? Surprise, I am aware, which is entirely to my discredit ! Might it just be possible that one could have *skipped* them, years and years ago ?

> *No nature could be less suspicious than hers ; when she was a child, she believed in the gratitude of wasps and the honourable susceptibility of sparrows.*

> *" It 's right enough to be speritial—I 'm no enemy to that ; but I like my potatoes mealy."*

> *That superior power of misery which distinguishes the human being, and places him at a proud distance from the melancholy chimpanzee.*

And, for the moment leaving George Eliot quotations to those who have the sense to desire a volume which must lead them on, or more probably back, to the re-reading of *Silas Marner* and *The Mill on the Floss*, and especially of *Middlemarch*—" *one of the most unspectacular of great books ; it is a masterpiece of scale* "—we may turn aside to Mr. Speaight's discriminate appreciation ; anyone can pay tribute to a writer's high achievement, but he generously evaluates even her lapses :

> *If* ROMOLA *is a failure, it is a noble failure, for it suffers literally from too much nobility.*

> *The work of a mature mind, even if it does not quite come off, is more rewarding than the successes of lesser men.*

One may wonder whether the secret of fair criticism may not ultimately be that the biographer ends quite simply by liking his subject ? Robert Speaight *likes* George Eliot, and so presently we begin to like her too, feeling that her attitude all through her life (and letters) admirably endorses what he calls " *the Shakespearean ability to sit down before experience like a little child.*" Needless to say, we are most competently taken through her novels one by one : *Adam Bede, Silas Marner, Romola, Middlemarch, Daniel Deronda, The Mill on the Floss*—of which Mr. Speaight truly remarks :

> *It is easy for a writer to lose himself among the anecdotes of infancy and the idylls of adolescence ; but it is a much more delicate task to relate these to each other, and to understand, in the very moment of recapture, the remembered gleam.*

We would like to draw our readers' attention to the *Queen's Classics*, a new series brought out by Messrs. Chatto and Windus. At prices ranging from 4s. 6d. to 5s. 6d., and a catholic range of authors from Mark Twain, through Richard Hughes, to Emma Smith, most attractively printed and bound, these are books for daily and personal use, both in the class-room and by the fire.

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"WHAT HAVE I GOT TO LOSE, DOCTOR?"

Photo: Will Acton.

Strictly Biographical

By Louis T. Stanley

The Most Reverend Cyril F. Garbett, D.D.

Lord Archbishop of York, Primate of England, and Metropolitan

WHEN Archbishop Temple died, there were many who felt that in sheer distinction, ability and moral stature, Dr. Garbett was the man to succeed the Primate of All England. Such doubts as were felt were held on totally different grounds. Was it the best thing for the Church or for the man himself to place upon him the weight of such increased administrative duties and heavier shackles of official reticence as might be at variance with his own interpretation of spiritual leadership? At York he would keep more freedom and more scope for his gifts of thought and utterance. Might not his contribution be impaired rather than enhanced if he went to Canterbury? Happily for the Church, he remained at York to continue his rôle as spokesman of the national Christian conscience.

To meet the Archbishop is a stimulating experience. Once, in the Library of the House, I was writing some notes. Dr. Garbett came in and started to write just opposite me. We looked up and caught each other's eyes. His face lit up into a smile that was half-mischievous, as if to say that words were elusive rascals, as we both knew. Three times he looked up and smiled, yet he never spoke. I believe he was preparing a speech, but could not find himself in close proximity to a fellow-creature without demonstrating the warmth and kindliness of his heart.

When next I met Dr. Garbett, it was at Bishopthorpe, that impressive centuries-old Manor House which has sheltered successive Primates of the Northern Province. The setting was perfect. A dim, cloudy day had threatened at any moment to burst into tears. The elms, so dusty and undistinguished in April and May, were burning out their dross in fires of gold. Starlings were making clumsy attempts to imitate swallows as fly-catchers. The quiet was broken by the bark of a jay jinking from an oak and the meditative carols of answering robins. A wren, beak and tail sharply cocked, interpolated his fiery little jet of song. After the bustle of Stonegate, the serene atmosphere of those spacious lawns fringed by the slow-moving Ouse offered the tranquillity of an age long past.

My impression of Dr. Garbett in his own background was just as simple and unimportant, but it has now suddenly taken on vividness like a painting that has been cleaned. He sat before a massive desk in a study that had about it an air of academic dignity. In many ways Dr. Garbett is an incalculable personality. He never speaks badly, but he often seems to put a definite limit to the standard which he intends to reach. He gives the impression of a man keeping himself in hand. As he talked of his

extensive global travels, I thought how the moving finger of history must have paused for a moment at the scene in the Kremlin when the Primate met Mr. Molotov, whom he found phlegmatic and intractable. The visit to Moscow followed hard on the announcement of the installation of the Metropolitan Sergius as Patriarch of the Orthodox Church and of the revival of the Holy Synod. Although the occasion is ten years ago, details of incidents are still vivid in his mind.

As I studied the Archbishop, it occurred to me how thin is the wall that divides the Churchman and the Statesman. In his case, it must be little more than a shadow of a wall, for his mannerisms, even his voice, with its moments of abruptness and peremptoriness, show that he has the stuff of politics in his blood. His range of interests is wide. With unflagging energy he commented on the Russian methods of collective farming—for he is one of the few Englishmen to have first-hand knowledge of this system—the sufferings of the persecuted Church in China; the situation in Poland and Germany; the penalising aspects of divorce in this country; the cause of the disturbing drop in the number of ordinands, plus an explanation why a high percentage of potential candidates are rejected by selection committees; the case for pluralities; the disturbing rise in juvenile crime and the statistical increase in immorality; but the Archbishop's main theme was bound up with the daily problems of parish administration side by side with the crisis of the retreat from Christianity.

Starting from his definition of a national Church as comprehensive, autonomous and an integral part of the national life, Dr. Garbett discussed what that rôle involved in England to-day. Here was the voice of a leader, elderly in years, yet dynamic in spirit. His comments were terse, incisive, and direct. . . . The test of a true faith is its secularity. Christian leadership must be realistic. The crisis of civilisation in our time is fundamentally

Photo: A. F. Kersting.

York Minster—the West Front.

moral and religious. The age of religious neutrality has ended. Religion is not a clerical specialisation. The gulf is widening between the Church and the people. There is a widespread drift of great masses of our population away from any concern with Christianity. The majority of the rising generation are entirely ignorant of Christian teaching, and wholly out of touch with Christian worship. If we measure on the scale of church-going, we seem predominantly a pagan country. Though fundamentally still at heart Christian, we are living upon wasting capital. The Church needs a new conception of pastoral work and of moral and social leadership.

In such a campaign Dr. Garbett provides the spiritual directive that is needed. Unlike certain bishops, the Primate realises the necessity of keeping in touch with lay opinion in this country outside official circles and the Athenæum. The tragedy with so many clerics in high office is that they hobble along, hipped, hindered and hamstrung because they have not learned to use the resources that lie to their hands. There are those who differ from Cyril Ebor's ideas how the landslide from the Church can be checked, but none have dared to impugn his integrity or to call in question his entire fearlessness. To credit any man with all the gifts and qualifications needed for Primacy would merely be fulsome and could not be true. That he is infallible in judgment is more than can be predicted of anybody. But it is certain that Dr. Garbett has never allowed himself to be rendered incapable of action by the fear of ever making a mistake.

Undoubtedly the Archbishop is a great personality in an age not too richly endowed with outstanding men. And since he cannot be deflected by flattery or abuse, I believe that he will build a monument for himself out of the stones hurled at him by his few detractors.

Photo: Will Acton.

On the lawn at Bishopthorpe.

AT ST. GEORGE'S, HANOVER SQUARE. The former Miss Vivian Penfold, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. de Lisle Penfold, married the Hon. David Bewick-Copleye, son of Lord and Lady Cromwell.

WEDDING. Baron Otto-Wendt Von Radowitz with his bride, the former Miss Prudence Holt, and their attendants, after their marriage at St. James's, Spanish Place. The honeymoon is being spent in Germany, in the castle where Napoleon was imprisoned before being sent to Elba.

SUSSEX MEET. A charming picture of the Hon. Camilla Gage at a Meet of the Southdown Hounds which was held at the home of her parents, Lord and Lady Gage.

ENGAGEMENT. Miss Heather Drummond, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. John Drummond, of Megginch Castle, Errol, Perthshire, and her fiancé, Lieut. Andrew Currey, R.N., son of Rear-Admiral and Mrs. Currey.

AT ST. MARGARET'S, WESTMINSTER. Mr. Crispin Gascoigne, son of Major-General Sir Julian and Lady Gascoigne, married the Hon. Ann Harcourt, eldest daughter of Lord Harcourt and the Hon. Mrs. O'Shaughnessy.

Notes and Pictures from

Our Social Diary

THIS is the time of year when one wholeheartedly envies those fortunate beings who can escape to wherever the sun shines. The compensations for being left behind to contend with the tedium of the remaining winter months are few, but for lovers of the arts there are some relieving factors to be found in London. Raoul Dufy at the Tate, Agnew's collection of water-colours, and, of course, the Flemish paintings at Burlington House, which to appreciate fully one must visit many times. There has also been the Robert Helpmann production at Covent Garden of Rimsky-Korsakov's last opera, *Le Coq d'Or*, which has not been heard in this country since 1924, and the Marquis de Cuevas Ballet, which is over here for a three-weeks season at the Stoll Theatre.

I went to the first performance of *Le Coq d'Or*, and was completely captivated by this altogether delightful opera, the story of which is based on a fairy-tale by Pushkin and, I should have thought, could be enjoyed by older children as much as any pantomime. The *décor* by Loudon Sainthill is quite outstanding, as indeed are the amazing vocal powers of Mattiwilda Dobbs, who also possesses a strong dramatic and extremely attractive personality; as for the interpretation of the part of King Dodon by Howell Glynne, I thought it a brilliant characterisation, and I quite lost my heart to this cosiest of monarchs.

A large and distinguished audience gave the opera the reception it deserved. H.R.H. the Duchess of Kent was in the Royal box with Princess Alexandra, Prince and Princess Paul of Yugoslavia, and their son and daughter, Prince Nicholas and Princess Elizabeth. In the foyer I saw the Earl and Countess of Harewood, Lady Dashwood with Mr. Alan Pryce-Jones, Sir Malcolm Sargent and Lady Anne Southby. Sir Kenneth Clark was in a box with his wife and daughter, as were Mr. and Mrs. Anthony Hornby, and Mr. and Mrs. Reresby Sitwell. On another evening Lord and Lady Waverley, who have just returned from abroad, brought a large party and their guests included Mary, Duchess of Devonshire, the Duke of Wellington, Mr. Harold Macmillan, Mrs. R. A. Butler and Mr. Edward Seago.

The opening performance of the Marquis de Cuevas Ballet included two ballets which have not been seen here before—*La Tertulia* and *Dona Ines de Castro*. Although the choreography of these two was disappointing, I did admire the vividness and subtle blending of colours of the costumes, particularly in the latter ballet. I wholeheartedly enjoyed the *Prisoner in the Caucasus*, with its virile dancing by the male dancers, and the gay, shimmering dance of the Caucasian maidens. Outstanding too was the dancing of George Skibine, who was responsible for the choreography, and Marjorie Tallchief. Among the audience I noticed Lord Kilmarnock with a party of friends, Lady Moira Combe, Sir Herbert and Lady Cohen and Lady Hore-Belisha, who was with Prince Alexander Romanoff.

EARL AND COUNTESS MOUNTBATTEN each received the Freedom of the City of Edinburgh. Lord Mountbatten is being presented with the Casket containing the Burgess Scroll by the Lord Provost, Sir James Miller, at the Usher Hall, Edinburgh.

COCKTAIL PARTY. Miss Christina Foyle, Miss Margot Campbell and Mr. Herbert van Thal were guests at a party held in the Ritz Hotel to launch Mr. Anthony Rhodes' new novel, *The General's Summer House.*

FANCY-DRESS PARTY. More than 1000 children went to the party at the Mansion House. The Lord Mayor, Sir Noel Bowater, and the Lady Mayoress received their young guests.

SALMON - FISHING. Lady Malvina Murray, daughter of Earl and Countess Mansfield, well wrapped against the cold, when the salmon-fishing season opened in Scotland.

MARQUIS DE CUEVAS BALLET. Prince Alexander Romanoff with Lady Hore-Belisha at the first night of the ballet, which is here for three weeks at the Stoll Theatre.

I very much enjoyed the dance I went to at the Lansdowne Club, the first of a series which are to be given during the coming year. Lieut.-Colonel Ware, the Club Secretary, acted as host, and told me that the main purpose of the dances is to enable the younger members and their friends to forgather for an inexpensive evening's enjoyment. This certainly seems to have been achieved that night (the charge for dancing with supper included is only 15s. 6d.) and there were a great many young people present who seemed to be thoroughly enjoying themselves. Lionel Paulas' band played, and there were also reels to the accompaniment of the bagpipes played by Pipe-Major Ledgett, formerly of the London Scottish. Among the guests were the Hon. Morys and Mrs. Bruce with Major Rhydian and Lady Honor Llewellyn, the Earl of Suffolk, M. Xavier Dormeuil, Mr. Tom Barnard and his two pretty sisters, Mr. Jerry Akroyd and Miss Mary Orr Deas.

The Empire Games are to be held in Canada this year, and the Council for the British Empire and Commonwealth Games hopes to raise sufficient funds to send over an English team. As one of the means of doing this, a ball is to be held at the Dorchester on June 1st, and Earl Alexander and Earl Beatty (who is Chairman of the Council) gave a cocktail party at the House of Lords for the purpose of forming the Ball Committee. The two hosts, together with Countess Beatty, who looked very smart in a grey tailored dress and close-fitting black velvet hat, received the guests. Representatives from the Commonwealth included Sir John Lienhop, Agent-General for Western Australia, Mr. W. McAdam, Agent-General for British Columbia, and Mr. H. B. Ross, Acting High Commissioner for the Federation of Rhodesia and Nyasaland. Other guests I saw were Lord Rendlesham, Sir Harold Bowden, Mr. and Mrs. John Clements, Mr. Michael Naylor-Leyland and Mrs. Donaldson-Hudson.

Earl Alexander spoke of the very real good the Games did in furthering friendship and understanding between the young people of all parts of the Commonwealth, and how vital it was that England should be represented. It was decided to name the ball the "Derby Eve Ball," and Earl Alexander, as President of the Ball Committee, will receive the guests with Countess Alexander; Earl Beatty and Mrs. Pezare are to be joint-Chairmen, and Lady Noel Curtis-Bennett will act as Vice-President.

The success this season of the two mares owned and trained by Mr. Edward Courage has aroused the admiration of their friends and the interest of many people in the racing world. Mr. Courage took out a trainer's licence under National Hunt Rules for the first time this season, and although there are no professional "gallops" near his home in Oxfordshire, and he himself works in London during the week, the stable can boast four winners within a remarkably short time. Another interesting factor is that both mares, *Tiberina* and *Tiberetta*, were bred by Mr. Courage from his mare *Rumrora*. Mrs. Courage shares her husband's interest and enthusiasm, and when I went down to spend a week-end with them recently, I found Mr. Noel Cannon, who was private trainer to the late Mr. J. V. Rank for many years, and Mr. Fairlie, himself an owner, and Mrs. Fairlie staying as guests. Mr. Fairlie has continued writing the Bulldog Drummond stories since the death of "Sapper," who was a great personal friend. On the Saturday we had a very enjoyable day's shooting in which we were joined by Mr. and Mrs. Dick Agnew, Commander Paysley-Tyler and Mr. John Millais. One woodcock seemed deliberately to flout all the guns, but finally fell victim to one in the last drive. On Sunday morning we saw a charming little foal, which had been born only three days previously, and two yearlings which we all hoped would continue to carry the stable colours to victory.

AT THE THEATRE with J. C. TREWIN

The Illyrians and the Russians

Twelfth Night
(Old Vic)

IDEALLY, a drama critic should not be self-conscious. He should never (in capitals) Take Up His Pen, saying sternly that he has to look down upon this or that performance from a great height. (And, in his notice, he should never, never allude archly to the fact that he is a critic, and therefore an oracle set apart.) Still, when it comes to yet another performance of *Twelfth Night*, the dear man does long to explain now and then that, in the course of his duties, he has met the play maybe threescore times—it is the happiest of occupational risks—and that he is trying not to repeat himself.

I write in this way, procrastinating, because the newest revival of *Twelfth Night* does not offer much for discussion. It is in the romantic mood—even though its Malvolio and Sir Andrew come out best—and almost the only new thing in it is the transference of the drinking scene to the open air: in fact, to a portable rose-arbour half an hour or so before cock-crow. (It appears to be a long way from the house; I should have thought Toby and Andrew could have made all the noise they wished.) We are so used to open-air revivals of *Twelfth Night* that this innovation does not stir us deeply; doubtless it was forced upon that fine Shakespearean, Denis Carey, by the need to wrap the production round the permanent façade—the glum wall that still gets in the way on the Old Vic stage. This time James Bailey has himself designed the rest of the décor, so the effect is less exasperating than it has been.

Throughout this romantic *Twelfth Night* the grouping is graceful; the action is eased along; there is little or no hurtling, romping broad comedy. I dare say Richard Burton's Sir Toby is suitably restrained in the spirit of the revival. But the man has no flicker of comic feeling, no natural humour. This is simply miscasting; from the present company I should have chosen Edgar Wreford for the part; he is coping now with Antonio. The other unlucky performance—to get the grumbles over at once—is Claire Bloom's. This, to me, is the shell of Viola: the actress glides through her part without persuading me of the truth of any simulated emotion. She is a clever actress, but (and I speak for myself) she has not developed her powers of communication: heart does not speak to heart.

Elsewhere, the tale is far happier. John Neville is the most truly romantic Orsino for years (one young man I recall, not long ago, was clearly working out problems in algebra); Gwen Cherrell, speaking the verse gently, is her pleasant, unfussed self as Olivia; and, at least, Paul Daneman is not obtrusive as Feste, though I think that he misses some of the overtones. A bubbling Maria (Barbara Clegg), a Fabian (Bruce Sharman) who bravely pretends that it is quite a good part, a Sebastian (Robert Hardy) who cannot help being some way from twinship with Miss Bloom—and here we are with the prime memories of the evening: Michael Hordern's Malvolio, William Squire's Sir Andrew. Hordern may over-reach himself in the "cross-gartered" scene which gets out of control; elsewhere he is blissfully right, a sombre Black Rod of a fellow who rouses as much unforced laughter as I have heard in a *Twelfth Night* audience since Walter Hudd's never-to-be-forgotten performance at Stratford. And Hordern who, as we know, is a fine serious actor, can mingle true feeling with his comedy in the final scene. (Yet here, too, he has to find in his bosom a clutch of straw to be thrown down impatiently: it is a nice Hordernism.) A pity that Malvolio must come to the drinking scene, as usual, in his nightgown.

I find William Squire's Sir Andrew an enchantment. Andrew was adored once;

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT: Kenneth Griffith as Raskolnikov and Rosalind Boxall as the harlot, Sonia, in John Fernald's moving production at the Arts Theatre.

he is adorable now. We have suffered often from not-very-merry Andrews: grim, teasy-weasy performances, blundering puppets devoid of humour or sense. William Squire is a blank, but a charming blank. The little man is a tame dormouse, so endearing that we wish almost that he might have his desire. Certainly he is not to be spoken to roughly, ill-used; and when Toby is surly to him at the last, our heart is all with the foolish knight who has done no harm to anybody. Mr. Squire's dim smile is exactly the thing: Andrew is, as he should be, "tossed up in mist" (not, by the way, an Illyrian expression). A final word. Mr. Carey has ended the play beautifully. Nothing could be better, in its vein, than the last moment when

> Upon the sun creeps soft the glimmering shade,
> And as the shadows deepen, Feste brings
> An air that yet from Shakespeare's London sings
> Its bitter-sweetness, pleasure knit with pain,
> Man's fleeting life amid the wind and rain.

Crime and Punishment
(Arts Theatre Club)

THE wind and the rain. . . . And at once we are in the St. Petersburg of 1865, where the student Raskolnikov, driven by his pride to murder, goes his haunted way to the last sacrifice. It is a dark business, this mosaic-version of the Dostoevsky novel, as adapted by Gaston Baty and produced by John Fernald in the Baty manner. I find it much less exciting than the freer (though more theatrically concentrated) Ackland version of 1946; it suffers, for one thing, because Kenneth Griffith lacks the right pathos. We can pity this Raskolnikov, but there is something curiously grotesque about his appearance.

For that matter, the play lacks the right stab of tragedy. It is too often simply lugubrious. One has to make every allowance; it is an extraordinarily difficult task to clench such a great book as this within the confines of the stage. Even so, only two performances took my imagination: Kenneth Hyde's—he brought up Marmeladoff in the drunken scene—and, above everything, Rosalind Boxall's. She is a superb Sonia; but then she is a superb actress. She was the dragon-clawing Queen Margaret in the *Henry the Sixth* trilogy; not long ago we saw her transform a part in *The Devil's General*; and now we find her as the submissive Sonia: lovely work without a gesture too many, or a doubtful inflection. And, for her sake, we forget the moments when we are on the edge of saying, in a line from another play, "This will last out a night in Russia, when nights are longest there."

Housemaster
(St. Martin's)

BY now the St. Martin's Theatre must be used to its academic status. I have been to three or four "school" plays there within the last few years; and probably it is somewhere on a Ministry of Education list. The latest tenants are the boys of Ian Hay's Marbledown, and the girls who are, so unexpectedly, school visitors. Marbledown was founded in 1936: it has dated a bit since then, though this would be less evident, I feel, in a stronger production. Throughout the première I had the idea—wrongly, perhaps—that some members of the company were patronising a play that still has considerable charm. They were struggling hard to act it, and to "improve" it. The result could be tiresomely self-conscious.

Luckily, one or two people have a better idea: Julian d'Albie, veracious as one of the masters: David Aylmer, who miraculously conceals the truth that his part is a series of chamois-leaps from Trembling Spur to Swaying Stone; and, of course, Jack Hulbert. He smooths his way so unaffectedly through a quietly amusing performance of Donkin, the "Old Moke," that we overlook the fact that Donkin should be another kind of person, or, shall we say, another brand of shaggy-dog altogether.

TWELFTH NIGHT : " We did keep time, sir, in our catches." Paul Daneman as Feste, William Squire as Sir Andrew, Michael Hordern as Malvolio, Richard Burton as Sir Toby, and Barbara Clegg as Maria.

OLD VIC's THREE IN REPERTORY

A comedy, a history, and a tragedy take it in turn to grace the Old Vic's permanent set. Richard Burton as Hamlet, Falconbridge, and Sir Toby (with Caliban to come) essays a wide range ; Michael Hordern brings an assured technique to Malvolio, Polonius, and King John ; Claire Bloom is a sweetly boyish Viola, a distraught Ophelia. Any evening at the Vic will be more than well spent.

Photographed by Angus McBean.

KING JOHN : "I have a Thing to say." Michael Hordern as the King incites Hubert (Edgar Wreford) to murder young Arthur.

HAMLET : "Oh, I am dead, Horatio." Richard Burton and William Squire in the final scene of the play.

TALKING OF TELEVISION: by CYRIL BUTCHER

The Ways of Women

ONE of the plays to be given during the coming fortnight has put me in mind of a story which hails from Paris.

It appears that a certain Monsieur X arrived one day at his club looking as if his world had crashed around him. He buttonholed one of his cronies and promptly began to pour out his tale of woe. His wife, he declared, whom he had believed to be so virtuous, had in fact been deceiving him for the past ten years. "*Regardez moi*," he concluded dramatically. "*Je suis le roi des cocus.*" The friend, thoroughly bored by the recital, merely raised an eyebrow and replied: "*Ah non, mon ami. Soyez un peu plus modeste.*"

Perhaps he had in mind the story, by Guy de Maupassant, of Monsieur Lantin—poor, deluded creature. It is called *The Jewels*, and you will be able to see the television adaptation of it on February 7th. It is a tiny little play and will not take up much of your viewing-time, for most of that Sunday evening will be occupied by an extract from *Sinbad on Ice*, starring the inimitable Norman Wisdom.

But let us *revenir à nos moutons*—and to Monsieur Lantin. Also to Madame Lantin, for the two have been most happily married for some years. Monsieur L. is a clerk in the Civil Service and depends for his livelihood on a somewhat meagre salary. But such a wonderful housewife, such a clever manager is she, that the pair of them live very comfortably indeed—one might even say luxuriously. Picture their bliss as he comes home from the office to a comfortable home and a meal, which is the last word in gastronomy, prepared by her loving hands. Such cooking is apt to make a man drowsy after eating it; so he has absolutely no objection to her indulging her passion for repeated visits to the theatre, or to her going out, smothered in a liberal array of imitation jewellery. But, alas, Madame L. dies and Monsieur L. finds it quite impossible to make ends meet, although there is only one mouth to feed now. In despair, he takes the aforementioned jewellery to a pawnbroker to try and raise a few francs on it.

It is at this point that he receives quite a shock—and I say "Ah, wait and see," to any enquiries as to what happens next.

NOW let us come back a week, to January 31st. On that Sunday night (with a repeat on February 4th) *The Chameleon* will be produced. This play also does much to prove how unpredictable the fair sex is. And as the author, Margaret Luce, belongs to it herself, there will no doubt be an air of authority about the argument.

Susanna Baring really is a menace; any right-thinking man would strangle her at sight—if only out of sheer self-defence. Fortunately for Susanna's pretty neck, and our story, males are apt to cease being right-thinking when an attractive young woman has the gift of adapting her personality to suit the fancies of whatever man she may be with. It is obviously a gift with an infinite capacity for causing complications.

So when Susanna announces her intention of coming to stay with her step-sister Lesley Forester, in the country, for an indefinite time, the news produces a marked lack of enthusiasm. Lesley tells her husband Matthew that he must be firm with Susanna; he must definitely limit the duration of the stay and make her pay for her board and lodging. Needless to say, in a matter of minutes, Matthew is clay in Susanna's hands. So are Keith Chavasse, a rabid young Socialist (for whom she obligingly plays the part of a delicate Dresden doll), and Oliver Boyd-Mulholland, the young local Conservative M.P. (who likes a girl who can walk seven miles, ride fierce stallions and wax ecstatic on the subject of manure).

The only one who can see through our chameleon is her cousin, Hugh Courage, who is quite proof against her wiles. Or is he?

ANGRAVE'S ALPHABET

B for Blunderbuss

BLUNDERBUSS: *A vehicle in the public service, clumsily driven.*

AN opera, *Dark Sonnet*, is scheduled for February 2nd. This work, by Erik Chisholm, follows the new trend among operas, for a short, rather grim story told with very few characters. This one reduces the cast to the absolute minimum, with only one character: Mrs. Roland. She is the brain child of Eugene O'Neill, for this is a musical setting of his story *Before Breakfast*.

Neither Mrs. Roland nor her husband (who is never seen) can be classed as attractive characters. He, apparently, is a lazy, good-for-nothing, poetic libertine, and she a drunken, evil-tempered scold. Indeed her reviling of her spouse comprises the text of this short opera. But somehow I think you will be left with just a shred of sympathy for both of them.

On February 6th we shall have the first instalment of *Clementina*, by our own C. A. Lejeune, who is one of the few critics of television who dares to try to practise what she preaches. *Clementina*, which follows *The Teckman Biography* as a Saturday night serial, is best described as an historical thriller and is an adaptation of A. E. W. Mason's novel.

The period is the winter of 1718-19, when James Stuart, the Old Pretender, exiled in Rome, chooses Clementina, Princess of Poland, as a suitable bride to help him in his plans to secure the throne of Britain. But the match is opposed by King George I. and the Emperor Charles VI. of Austria, who arranges for Clementina and her mother to be detained and held at Innsbruck. Of course, there is a scheme to rescue her and that makes a pretty thick plot to sort out in six episodes.

CATEGORICALLY SPEAKING . . .

Good

The Deep Blue Sea, by Terence Rattigan. This was quite one of the brightest jewels of television's crown, to date. The play, which I discussed last time, is of course superb, and the performances which it inspired on January 17th were a full match for it. Googie Withers, Kenneth More and Robert Harris—if only there were space to say more about them—were each entirely different and each left me gasping at their brilliance. The producer, Julian Amyes, not only did a wonderful technical job, but made his cameras into an extra character for the play: an active observer and commentator on what transpired.

Indifferent

By comparison, pretty well everything else. Would various engineers please note that it would be pleasant to have more uninterrupted programmes and that Normal Service should not only be resumed but Come to Stay?

Personality Parade—16

LADY DOCKER

Photographed for "THE SKETCH" by Houston Rogers.

The dictionary defines "glamour" as "magic, enchantment, or charm," but those words only convey a small part of the very special quality which is Lady Docker's. There is no one quite like her. She is vitally alive and perpetually interested in everything and everyone about her. When she enters a room, her blonde beauty immediately becomes the focal-point for all eyes. It is impossible to be dull in her company: she has a great capacity for enjoyment and an ability to increase that capacity in others. She can be wickedly witty when she wants to, which makes her a constant thorn in the side of the pompous, who are a ready-made target for her sharpened sense of fun. Her beautiful hazel eyes are exceptionally expressive and mirror her every thought: they cloud quickly as she recalls some ill-willed comment designed to snub—but the mischievous sparkle always returns with a rush as the memory of her own reply restores the balance.

UNE RUE DE DINAN, by Vivancos.
(Lefevre Gallery, 30, Bruton Street, W.1. £35.)

PORTRAIT, by John Minton.
(Lefevre Gallery. 30 gns.)

These pictures are from some of the recent interesting exhibitions held in London. The fine showing of Dufy's works at the Tate Gallery will be open until February 6th, and the exhibition of the work of Russian Emigré artists in Paris at the Redfern Gallery will be open until January 30th.

YELLOW CONC

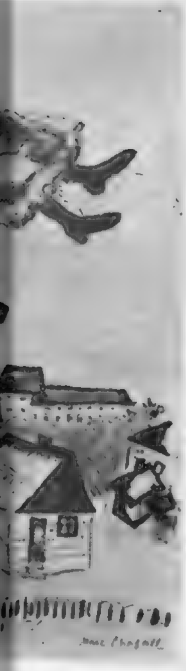
Around t

DANCEUSES, by Marie Laurencin.
(Ohana Gallery, 13, Carlos Place, W.1. £10.)

AU DESSUS DE LA VILLE, by Marc Chagal
(Redfern Gallery. Bought by private collect

by Raoul Dufy. (Tate Gallery until February 6th. From the collection of M. Louis Carré, Paris.)

e Art Galleries



AT THE CIRCUS, by Vertès.
(Ohana Gallery, 13, Carlos Place, W.1. £25.)

FILLETTE AU CHAPEAU, by Terechkovitch.
(Redfern, 20, Cork Street, W.1. 150 gns.)

"Please Forward": by Joyce Dennys.

Henrietta Speaks Out

"I don't think I could wear a frock without any top. I'd be so afraid of coming out."

"You are more than I ever dared hope for."

The Conductor laughed so much that he fell out into the aisle.

MY DEAR ROBERT,

Have you ever met anybody whose hair turned white in a single night as the result of some horrific experience?

Well, mine hasn't, but it ought to have after what happened to me last night. This is how it was. A few weeks ago I got a letter asking me to appear in a Brains Trust, to be held in a neighbouring town.

When I passed the letter across the breakfast-table to Charles he burst into roars of unkind laughter. "I don't suppose there's another woman in England with as much incorrect information stored away in her head as you, Henrietta," he said.

Seeking the encouragement which is so often denied one in the home, I hurried round to Lady B. with my letter. "Darling Henrietta," said Lady B. "How thrilling! I shall certainly come."

"I suppose it's all right?" I said. "I don't know much about Things in General."

"Let us hope for the best," said Lady B.

The news soon spread round the village and after lunch Faith arrived at our house with a beautiful, filmy, grey, strapless evening dress. "You must wear this, Henrietta," she said firmly. "You won't know the answers to the questions, so you may as well try and look nice."

"I don't think I could wear a frock without any top, Faith," I said. "I'd be so afraid of coming out."

"I only wanted to help," said Faith, and her beautiful eyes filled with tears.

"Darling, you're always a wonderful help," said Charles, and he kissed her tenderly. Sometimes I think people are almost too ready to comfort Faith.

On the day of the Brains Trust black panic descended upon me. After tea I felt so peculiar I took my temperature, but it was disappointingly normal.

"Cheer up, Old Girl," said Charles kindly, "it will soon be over. As Sir Winston Churchill has so truly said, 'The Trees Do Not Reach the Sky.' Why you said you'd do it, I really don't know. I suppose you were flattered. I suppose if they suddenly wrote and asked me to dance in Sylphides at Covent Garden I'd be flattered, but I hope I'd have the sense to refuse."

Not in any way cheered by this sensible observation, I clambered into the Conductor's car. Charles poked his head in at the window. "Don't talk too much, Henrietta," he said. "Women on Brains Trusts always sound such Bossy B's."

When we arrived at the Hall a young man was waiting for us. He went straight up to Faith and took both her hands. "Mrs. Browne," he said in a shaking voice, "I am the Question Master. You are more than I ever dared hope for."

"I am not Mrs. Browne," said Faith. "That's her—I mean that is she."

"Oh," said the Question Master. "Come with me, Mrs. Browne, and meet the rest of the Trust."

The rest of the Trust consisted of two self-assured young men. I gathered one was a Conservative Member of Parliament and the other a Prospective Labour Member of Parliament. "Are you frightened?" I said to the more assured of the two.

"Not in the least," he said. "Speaking in public is Second Nature to me."

"Come on, come on!" cried the Question Master. "It's time we began," and like a kindly sheep-dog he drove us before him into the Hall. My Supporters were in the third row and Lady B. blew me a kiss.

"I have great pleasure in introducing the Team," said the Question Master. "On my right we have Mrs. Harriette Browne——"

"Henrietta," I whispered into his ear.

The Question Master gave me a cold look and continued. "Mrs. Harriette Browne is, of course, well known to all of you as a Lecturer on Economics. Her latest book, *Economics for the Mentally Unwashed*, published by Dreary and Dreary, has been pronounced by the Critics as Epoch-Making." My Supporters in the third row sat with their mouths open like three large O's.

When I came to, the Question Master was reading out the first question. It was something about importing raw materials, and my Supporters were pointing wildly at the door urging me to flight. "Come now, Mrs. Browne," said the Question Master with ghastly heartiness, "this is just up your street."

I seized the pencil and pad which had been thoughtfully provided for each of us, and wrote in large, clear letters, "I AM NOT THAT MRS. BROWNE," and pushed it along the table to the Question Master, who gave it a glance and then, without batting an eyelid, said smoothly, "On the other hand, I think perhaps we will ask the Member for Blethington to speak first."

The Member for Blethington leapt to his feet. He seemed to know a great deal about raw materials, and the torrent of words which poured from his lips was as music in my ears. When he had finished, the Prospective Member for Welltide got up and contradicted everything the first speaker had said. Respite! The Question Master and I looked at each other and smiled.

"I don't know whether Mrs. Browne agrees with me," said the Prospective Member for Welltide. "Of course, she knows a great deal more about this subject."

"We've spent enough time on that," said the Question Master firmly, and my heart warmed towards him.

The next question was about the Conservatives, and the one after that was about the Labour Party. This was easy! Anybody could sit on a Brains Trust. Faith blew me a kiss and made the thumbs-up sign. I sat in a happy dream thinking of my garden. I was just wondering whether the crocuses I had planted up the drive would be the blaze of colour I hoped for, or whether they would be eaten by field-mice, when I suddenly realised there was a silence.

"Mrs. Browne!" said the Question Master, and there was a hint of sternness in his voice. I think he felt he had shielded me enough.

"Would you mind repeating the question?" I croaked.

"Is it right that the wives of would-be Members of Parliament should have to appear before a committee before their husbands are accepted as candidates?"

"Wives of prospective Members of Parliament," I said in a loud, clear voice, "must be like Potiphar's Wife—above suspicion."

The Conductor laughed so much that he fell out into the aisle.

When we got home Charles was asleep in front of the fire, with the *British Medical Journal* clasped to his stomach. As soon as he opened his eyes he said, "I hope you didn't talk too much, Henrietta."

"No, Charles," I said, "I didn't do that."

Always your affectionate Childhood's Friend,

HENRIETTA.

Specially photographed for "THE SKETCH" by Houston Rogers.

Diplomatic Hostesses: *Mme. Gunnar Hägglöf*

This delightful study of the charming wife of the Swedish Ambassador was taken at the Embassy residence in Portland Place. Italian-born Mme. Hägglöf loves her English home, and, indeed, loves England. She has been here now for six years and this year is even taking a house in the country for her summer holiday, instead of going abroad. Gay, vivacious and a witty conversationalist, she is remarkably adept in the art of putting people at their ease, and the warmth and encouragement of her smile have brightened and smoothed the paths of many a new arrival on the diplomatic scene. What aspect of England does she most enjoy? "Oh, your *theatre*! There is nothing like it in the world! I love it—I see every play at least once!"

Sir Robert broadcasting on the occasion of the opening of an extension of the local network. Radiodiffusion on the island is by closed circuit land line, and programmes transmitted include sponsored features, recorded B.B.C. series and news from London.

The attractive south-west front of Government House, which has
Mahon, who is wearing the smart uniform of the local police :

Her Majesty's Representatives Abroad

BRIGADIER SIR ROBERT ARUNDELL, K.C.M.G., O.B.E.

Governor and Commander-in-Chief of Barbados

The Governor of Barbados, a small coral island little bigger than the Isle of Wight—but which has been termed "the hub of the Caribbean wheel"—is already a very busy man, but his responsibilities will certainly increase with the passing of the Bill on Ministerial Status which is now before the House of Assembly. However, the Governor and his lady are extremely happy in their present appointment to this sunny and colourful corner of the Empire, after the trials and tribulations of Grenada, with its incessant labour difficulties, which were a constant source of concern to Sir Robert in his long period as Governor of the Windward Islands.

Sir Robert and Lady Arundell have entertained more than two thousand guests at the delightful old Government House in the few months they have been there. They have many social functions to attend—military parades and State occasions, made gay by the presence of local police in their colourful uniforms, the opening of new public buildings and markets, and more personal tasks, such as school prize-givings.

Devonshire-born Sir Robert is a keen tennis player, but his main hobbies are gardening and agriculture, and having spent some years in Central Africa before the war, he is well-versed in tropical conditions. Lady Arundell shares these interests with enthusiasm, and to the lovely Government House garden she is adding a miniature home farm, with a small Barbados-bred Jersey cow, and geese which were presented to her in Grenada. She is rearing different types of hens, ducks and turkeys and hopes soon to have enough birds to supply the table in a house which has several large dinner-parties every week, and constantly entertains colourful and interesting people.

Parted from their only child during his schooldays, as are so many of our Colonial and Foreign Office personnel abroad, Sir Robert and Lady Arundell take great delight in his visits to them during his long vacations from Brasenose College, Oxford, where he is studying law.

Specially photographed for "THE SKETCH" by Anne Bolt.

Left: Sugar and the tourist trade dominate Barbadian economy, but various secondary industries are fostered. Here Sir Robert jokes with a woman worker at the new bacon and ham factory.

The Governor with the Hon. F. C. Hutson, a Member of the Legislative Council, looking over the Screw Lifting Dock, the only one of its kind in the Caribbean.

een altered externally since 1843. In the foreground is Orderly
acket and cap, with navy blue trousers trimmed with scarlet braid.

Lady Arundell with *George*, a much-travelled terrier, photographed on a stone seat in the delightful grounds of Government House.

The gardener, whose name is Hall and who has been at Government House for thirty-two years, helps Lady Arundell with some pruning and discusses her plans for the garden.

In Grenada, Lady Arundell was presented with several geese, and Conrad MacIntyre, the valet they brought with them from Grenada, regards them as his special charge.

Lady Arundell's favourite corner of the large grounds contains the delightful eighteenth-century stables, home nowadays of the small Jersey cow, *Lady Queen*.

In the charming old dining-room, butler Ormiston Warner checks place-names before an official dinner-party, which guests will enjoy by soft candlelight.

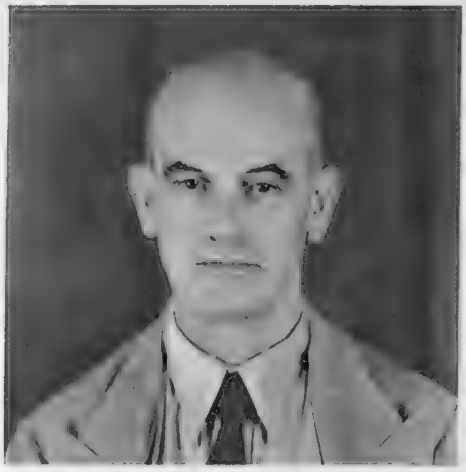
We Take Off Our Hat To . . .

MR. CHARLES ALEXANDER : For winning the battle at Hastings.

After a game lasting 13 hours 35 mins., that extended over three days and 120 moves, Mr. Alexander defeated the Russian, David Bronstein, an International Grand Master, at the Hastings Chess Congress. At the end of the Congress, the two men shared the title with 6½ points each. Russian players have since been accused in Moscow of "complacency."

MISS HERMIONE BADDELEY. For gastronomical daring.

At a Leading Ladies' Luncheon at the Washington Hotel on January 19th Miss Baddeley came up with the prize suggestion for an after-theatre supper menu. Cold eggs and a cutlet were followed by *Fallen Angels on Horseback*. "What are they ?" we asked. "I don't know, dear," said Miss Baddeley. "I suppose you just throw in everything you 've got."



MR. ALURED LONG : For devotion to family tradition.

Though his father, his grandfather and his great-grandfather all graduated from Trinity College, Dublin, Mr. Long, up to the time of his retirement from the Bank of England, had not. So he enrolled as a student and graduated at the age of sixty-six. Eventually he hopes to persuade his son, an R.N. engineer officer, to follow his example and maintain an unbroken tradition.

MRS. MAY CUNLIFFE-MILLINGTON : For a new look in Piccadilly.

The lady walked down Piccadilly in a neat sackcloth two-piece ; there were no ashes, however. This won Mrs. Cunliffe-Millington a bet of £5 from her undergraduate son, Timothy. The sacks cost 1s. and 9d., but the styling was all her own.

MISS DAPHNE WALKER : For Safety First on Ice.

Mistinguette, Marlene Dietrich and now Daphne Walker ; all have insured their legs. Miss Walker, a British ice-skating star at present appearing in pantomime at Wembley, has insured hers for £20,000. "I love skating so," she says.

Specially photographed for "THE SKETCH" by Houston Rogers.

A RUSSIAN EXTRAVAGANZA

Rimsky-Korsakov's opera, *Le Coq d'Or*, was not produced during his lifetime, for it was a broad political satire on the conduct of the Russo-Japanese War. Robert Helpmann's production at Covent Garden on January 7th made the most of the humour of the opera; at least one lady in the stalls was heard to say to her companion, "Do you think he 's making fun of it?" This performance was the fourth at the Garden; the other three were in 1919. The last performance of this season will be on February 10th. In this scene, King Dodon (Howell Glynne) falls exhausted before the Queen of Shemakhan (Mattiwilda Dobbs).

Mr. Tim Langley, the Berkeley Hunt's Whip, and Mr. Harry Scott, a huntsman, collecting tickets from newly-arrived guests Mrs. Brearley, Mr. Douglas Brearley and Mrs. George White.

Sharing a supper table are Mrs. Shepherd, Mr. Brooks, Mrs. Bush, Mrs. Brooks, Mr. Scott, Mrs. Cook and Mr. Cook and, with her back to the camera, Mrs. Scott.

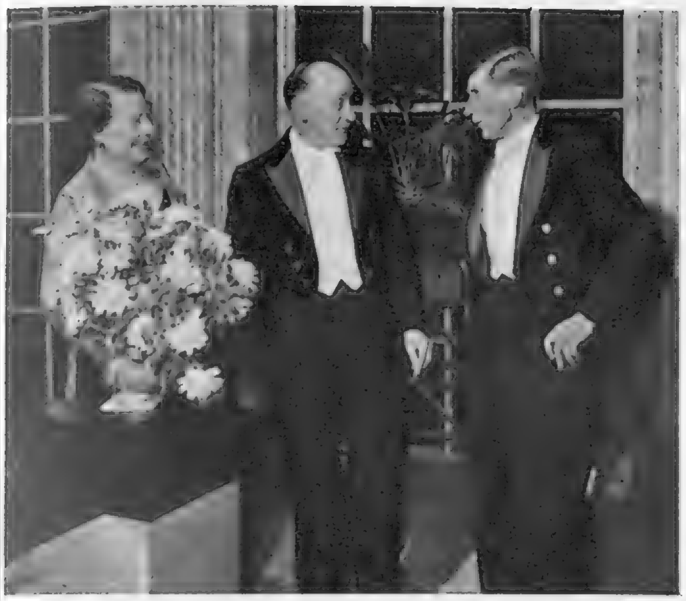
Mr. Auty, Whipper-in of the Wick and District Beagles, Mrs. J. A. Seymour Williams and her husband, who is Master of the Wick and District Beagles, and Mrs. King Smith.

Mr. Philips Price, M.P. for West Gloucester, with Mr. Jonathan Blow and Miss Elizabeth Williams.

The Berkeley Hunt Ball

At the supper table: Mr. and Mrs. Robathan, Captain Berkeley and Mrs. E. P. Butler.

Mrs. Angell James with Colonel Turner, who is a former Joint Master of the Berkeley Hunt, and, on right, Mr. Templeton.



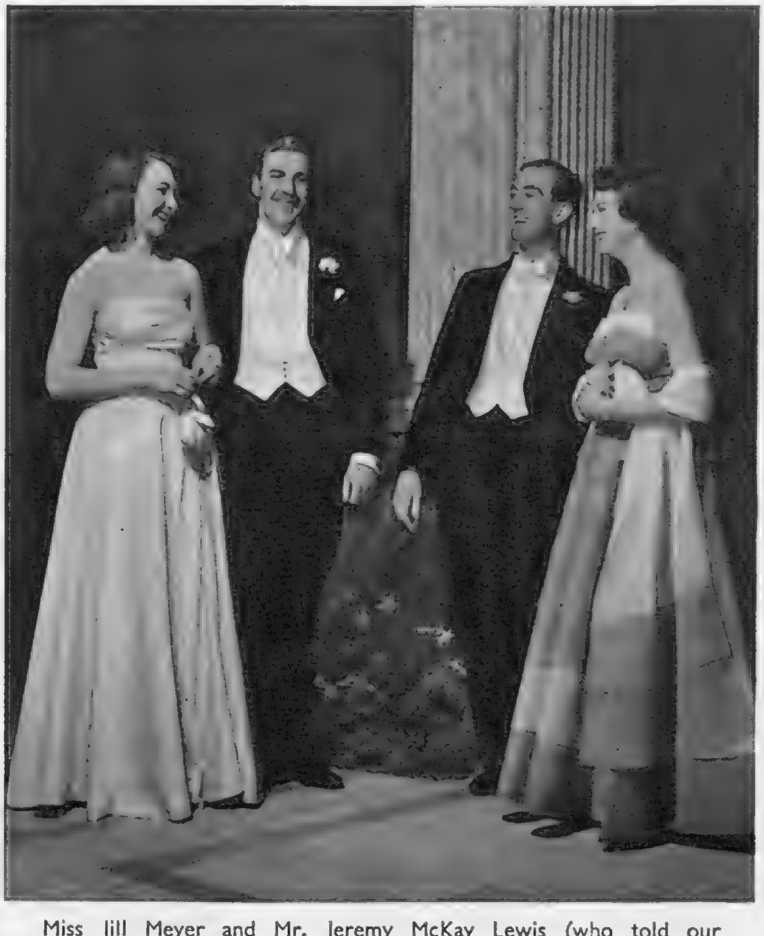
Mrs. F. H. Lister, with Mr. Frank Lister, a former Joint Master of the Hunt, and Mr. Kemp.

This year's invitations for the Berkeley Hunt Ball were enlivened by an excellent drawing of the famous Berkeley running fox by Mr. E. Robathan, of Acton Hall, Halmore. Mr. Robathan is a keen rider to hounds, as are his wife and his stepson, Mr. Berek Crossman, who was Master of the Eton College Beagles last season. The Ball was held in the lovely rooms of the Royal West of England Academy in Bristol, and there were some 250 guests. A novel feature of the evening was the provision of an oyster bar, which proved very popular. The Berkeley Hunt is one of the oldest in the country : in its early days it hunted from Berkeley Square and covered a large area right across to Somerset. To-day, hunting is between Bristol and Gloucester, and from the Severn across to the Cotswolds.

By "THE SKETCH" Special Photographer, Harold White.

Foursome enjoying a respite from the dancing here are Miss Ann Hadley, Mr. John Dayer, Mr. Stuart Hadley and Miss Peggy Ford.

Sampling the oysters is Mr. Brian Davidson, chairman of the Hunt Club's entertainments committee. Awaiting his verdict are Mrs. Davidson, Miss Elizabeth Algar and the Vicar of Thornbury.



Miss Jill Meyer and Mr. Jeremy McKay Lewis (who told our photographer that they were about to announce their engagement) with Mr. Peter James and Miss Gillian-Rosemary Joseph.

AT THE CINEMA with C. A. LEJEUNE

Two Ways of Looking at Sex

How to Marry a Millionaire

(*Odeon, Marble Arch*)

HAVING shown us in *The Robe* that CinemaScope can deal more or less effectively with action and spectacle, Twentieth Century-Fox now boldly takes the plunge and shows us what the new, wide pillar-box screen can do with domestic comedy.

The subject chosen for the experiment is *How to Marry a Millionaire*, a very slight story about three New York fashion models who rent a luxury apartment, for the sake of trapping three millionaires—any three millionaires—into marriage. The young ladies are presented by Marilyn Monroe, Betty Grable and Lauren Bacall; as most people will admit, a formidable trio. Marilyn, in case you don't recognise her, is the one with glasses, which she discards whenever the film gives her a moment's respite. Betty is the one with the sleekest expanse of leg, and Lauren the one who is supposed to have intelligence; a presumption which her rejection of nice, rich William Powell in favour of a boorish young man who refuses to wear a tie, even for fashionable weddings, hardly bears out.

CinemaScope takes a good deal of trouble to turn this simple affair into a picture that will effectively fill the pillar-box slot. It shows its three physically impressive young ladies as often as possible in recumbent, or semi-recumbent attitudes. (This is just as well because, in the few cases when one of them does stand up suddenly, she runs a very serious risk of decapitation.)

It plots its groups horizontally, keeping the characters as much as possible on one level. And it introduces some really impressive panoramic views of the snowy hills of Maine and the New York waterfront, with steamers approaching each other and passing gloriously from side to side of the wide proscenium.

From a technical point of view, this trivial comedy is a marked advance on *The Robe*, but it still remains a trivial comedy. To vary Dr. Johnson slightly, the wonder is not that it is so well done, but that it was thought worth doing at all. If you consider that CinemaScope is, *per se*, an advantage, there is no argument. If you don't—well, there's still probably no argument, for we are going to have it whether we like it or not, and it is just as well to get used to it in all its manifestations. There is one thing to be said for the new screen. It is at least making the film-makers think; and that's something to be thankful for, because they haven't been doing much of that for quite some time.

The Moon is Blue

(*London Pavilion*)

THE most remarkable thing about this very slender comedy is the inordinate amount of moral indignation it has aroused; a state of affairs that leaves me, as Damon Runyon might have said, bewildered more than somewhat.

What is it all about? A young maiden (Maggie McNamara) is picked up on the top of the Empire State Building by a young man (William Holden). On the pretence of getting her to sew a button on his coat, he takes her back to his apartment. There they are joined by an elderly playboy (David Niven) and spend a fairly protracted evening.

There is a lot of frank discussion of the simpler aspects of sex, in which such dreadful words as "virginity" and "seduction" are used quite freely. The young maiden even has the effrontery to tell the two men, without any beating about the bush, that if they have seduction in mind they can forget it, because it just doesn't appeal to her. She knows some girls like it, but she isn't that type of girl. She is much more interested in cooking a good supper; especially kedgeree, if they'll go and get the makings.

And that, roughly speaking, is the plot of *The Moon is Blue*. Since the comedy of sex is all talk and no do, and the "message"—if any—is that innocent virtue is completely unassailable, it seems to me not only a harmless work, but a work of almost noble propriety.

I admit that if it had been badly acted it might have been a shocking bore. But blessedly it is not. David Niven's smooth sense of timing never fails; William Holden, though less polished, is always equal to the demands of his job, and Maggie McNamara, with her pert nose, her glossy horsetail, her gravity, and the air of innocence that never seems assumed, is a perfect pet. I don't know where they got her from, but wherever it was, they mustn't send her back. Here is star material, if I ever saw it.

"AH! TWO MORE OF OUR FEATHERED FRIENDS TO SEE HOW WE ARE THIS MORNING!"

Other New Films

HELL BELOW ZERO (*Plaza*).—Alan Ladd and Joan Tetzel (of *The Little Hut*) in a British-made version of Hammond Innes' book *The White South*. The captain of an Antarctic whaling fleet disappears overboard in circumstances which suggest foul play; his daughter and a quixotic American whom she meets on the 'plane to Cape Town join the expedition to find his murderer. In spite of some fine Technicolor photography of fog-bound sea and ice-pack, the picture just fails to be convincing; considerable assault and battery does not atone for naïve screen-play and dialogue. The best thing in it is the *début* of a little London actress named Jill Bennett, in the short part of the captain of a Scandinavian whaler. She is as lively as a piece of quicksilver, and although not beautiful, has a quality that holds your attention every minute she is on the screen.

SO BIG (*Warner*).—Jane Wyman in an old-fashioned tear-jerker by Edna Ferber about a poor farmer's widow who devotes her life to making her son an architect, only to watch him turn into a horrid, affluent sales-promoter. Not nearly as silly as it sounds; nice work from Miss Wyman; plenty of outdoor scenes with the real country *feeling*.

FORBIDDEN FRUIT (*Cameo-Polytechnic*).—The great comedian Fernandel playing "straight" in a Simenon story about a middle-aged doctor, whose home life is so unrewarding that he falls in love with a heartless little minx (Françoise Arnoul) whom he meets in a Marseilles bar, and misguidedly tries to install in his family circle. Most of the characters behave badly, but are quite plausible, and the film, although not a great one, seems rather touching, to my mind.

SADIE HAYWORTH !

The Columbia production of *Miss Sadie Thompson* reputedly brings us a new Rita Hayworth in the leading part. It certainly brings us a new Sadie Thompson. No expense has apparently been spared. Miss Hayworth's wardrobe (specially designed by couturier Jean Louis) is "colourful, tropical and daring." Her coiffure (specially designed by hair stylist Helen Hunt) has a "careless, provocative effect." (They call it "Careless Curls"—it will probably start a fashion !) During filming, 2,000,000 gallons of water poured over the sets and the players, and 14,000 ft. of hose and piping, 80 valves and 240 overhead sprinklers were shipped to the film location on Kauai, in Hawaii—along with several dozen plastic-fabricated palm trees. In what the producers call "this straight, dramatic production," they have contrived to integrate into the action four songs for Rita to sing—but only one dance, performed to a new number called *The Heat Is On*. Faced with a combination of Rita Hayworth's version of Maugham's shady lady and screen-playwright Harry Kleiner's version of Maugham's South Seas classic, the author's admirers will be relieved to hear that "the story has been modernised without taking liberties with the theme, characters or tone." We can't wait.

MOTORING with WILLIAM HARTLEY

The Californian Minx

THE Hillman *Minx* has for a long time been one of the most popular of our smaller cars. And deservedly so. From the mechanical point of view, the *Minx* is a good little performer. Quite pleasingly snappy and yet economical, the car happily performs any normal task, though there is, I feel, a suspicion of over-steer on the right lock. But the general road-holding and cornering, either laden or with the driver alone, are reassuring.

The body is what chiefly differentiates the Californian model of the *Minx*. Although it only has two doors, there is ample room in the back seat for two adults, and the seat itself is comfortable and well finished. The door windows drop right down in the normal way, and the quarter windows wind down fan-wise, so that the whole of the side of the car is open. Thus, it becomes like a tourer with a hard top! This is a very pleasant feature indeed. And when closed, it is exactly like any other saloon.

The luggage boot is of ample size, and the method of opening is unusually simple. I have before criticised boot-opening handles (or the lack of them), and so I particularly welcomed this feature.

There are several attractive two-colour exterior finish schemes to choose from, each pleasing in its own way. Personally, I admired very much the cream with the cherry-red top. And I would add a final, commending word about the general standard of finish outside and in.

BLACK SPOTS SCANDAL : MISLEADING SIGNPOSTS : DRIVING IN FOG : OUR UNTRAINED CYCLISTS

TWO reports recently came my way on the same day, and they provide a most extraordinary commentary on motoring in this country. The R.A.C. announce that the number of dangerous road conditions reported by their members in 1953 was the lowest for five years. They investigate all such reports of poor conditions and take them up with the authorities concerned where they are justified. They claim a very high percentage of success in getting action taken. In 1953, out of 242 reports, action was taken in 230 cases. Now what surprises me here is the small number of such reports that were made. The R.A.C. themselves suggest that people are becoming apathetic as to road conditions. For the life of me I cannot understand why motorists are prepared to go on paying over £1,000,000 a day in taxation and continue suffering the appalling roads and lack of attention to danger spots.

The second report was from the British Road Federation, who represent the interests of more than 250,000 firms in trade and industry. They have addressed a memorandum to the Minister of Transport calling for at least £5,000,000 annually to be spent on the overdue elimination of road accident black spots. They recall that only £3,250,000 has been allocated for that purpose in two years, in spite of the Government's own statement that road accidents cost the country some £146,000,000 per annum. Highway engineers everywhere recognise that where a black spot is improved the accident rate is automatically and permanently reduced.

Now, what do you make of those two statements ? I will make no further comment other than to add that I hope it will inspire every motorist to add his voice and pen to the campaign.

* * *

I see that Sir Alexander Maxwell, Chairman of the British Travel and Holiday Association, has reported on the comments of the overseas visitors who came here last year. They include adverse comment upon the sign-posting of our roads. If we ourselves find sign-posting confusing, how much more difficult must it be for a visitor from overseas who has no knowledge of local directions whatsoever. This is a matter which each of us can do something about. Every time you are puzzled by direction signs or the lack of them, why not report it ? At least, if we don't do it for ourselves, we can now claim we are helping to earn much needed currency !

* * *

I have recently been hearing from a colleague that he has proved to himself that yellow lights make driving at night in foggy conditions somewhat less difficult. Now I know that some experts and technicians on this subject will deny this. Yet, from my own experience, I have found that with a yellow bulb there is far less tendency for the moisture to dazzle as it reflects the light back to your eyes. On the Continent, of course, yellow bulbs are the rule, and there is, as was pointed out to me, a certain comfort in driving into this yellow-coloured light.

There is a choice of methods of trying this out. You can get yellow bulbs or you can try, as a test measure, painting the lamp glasses with a special paint. This can be cleaned off quite easily.

* * *

Talking of dazzle reminds me to comment on the number of times I have been dazzled by cycle lamps ! It sounds silly, perhaps, but modern electric cycle lamps are bright. They are high up, and they wobble and shimmy about a great deal. It strikes me that this is just another instance of the absurd position which allows any child to ride a cycle on any highway, to do so without any mirror or any test to prove knowledge of the Highway Code (for what that may be worth), and to go through the motions of attempted suicide without anyone's bothering except the driver, whose skill has to save the cyclist's life. Odd, isn't it ?

* * *

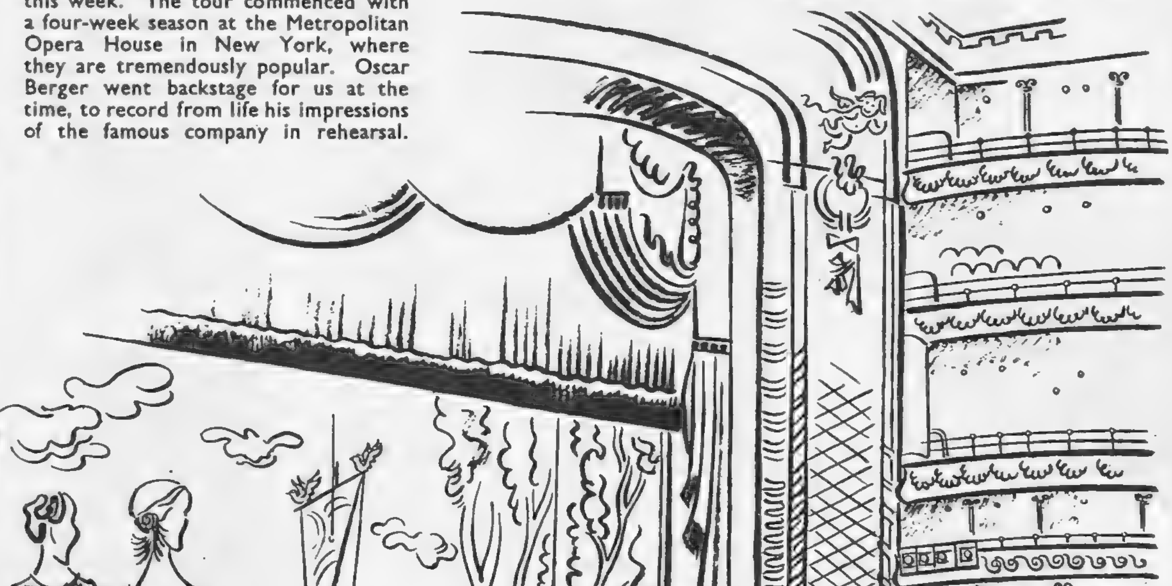
I see that Townsend Brothers' Ferries across the English Channel have reduced their charges by 20 per cent. ; this is now the cheapest way to take one's car abroad on the Dover–Calais run. I gather that already bookings are being made for the annual flood of motorists taking the car across for a Continental holiday. There is nothing like making plans early, and, for the busy season, it is very wise.

Berger takes his satirical pen behind the scenes.

BERGER BACKSTAGE

The Sadler's Wells Ballet Company ended their 19-weeks tour of America this week. The tour commenced with a four-week season at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York, where they are tremendously popular. Oscar Berger went backstage for us at the time, to record from life his impressions of the famous company in rehearsal.

Tall Rudolf Bing, general manager of "The Met.", and Sol Hurok, who has managed the Company's American tour.



Frederick Ashton directing a rehearsal of *Sylvia* from a seat in the orchestra stalls.

Our Fashion Portfolio

by NORAH OWEN

TO SUIT YOU

Suit yourself, whether your suit is for town or country, whether it has a loose or fitting jacket, whether the skirt is wide or narrow. A perennial Spring favourite, with varied modifications in its classic line, a suit is the backbone of a busy woman's wardrobe.

A classic suit that can be worn for town or country. It has a single-breasted, fitting jacket with two flapped breast-pockets, soft shoulders and a velvet collar. The skirt has all-round wide pleats. In fine, basket-weave tweed, in black-and-white or brown-and-white. By Rensor, price approximately 11 gns., from Dickins and Jones, London ; and Bobby's, Bournemouth. Dorville's black, sequin-trimmed pull-on hat from French of London.

The vogue for tough tweed, combined with classic simplicity, is shown in Dorville's black-and-green pebbly tweed, slim-fitting suit. The single-breasted jacket is braid-trimmed, with flapped hip-pockets. The skirt is straight with a back kick-pleat. Price about 19½ gns., from Simpson's, Piccadilly ; and Samuel's, Manchester. The white, woolly gnome's cap, also by Dorville, is found in the Boutique at French of London, 4, Curzon Street.

Specially photographed for "THE SKETCH" by Denis Hughes-Gilbey at the Time and Life Building, New Bond Street.

Delightful for Spring and Summer wear, a suit in dark-grey and white flannel. The loose jacket has a double-breasted fastening, a high roll-collar, three-quarter sleeves and casual shoulders. The skirt is slim. By Simon Massey, price about 20 gns., from Harvey Nichols, Knightsbridge; and Bon Marché, Liverpool. Dorville's black-and-white angora cap from French of London.

Blonde Elegance

Gentlemen may or may not prefer blondes, but this year women are showing their preference for blonde colourings in furs, combined with pale, matching accessories. Honey colours, beiges, stone shades, oatmeal and ivory are all in the news for Spring. Nylon, too, is headline news, and here in ash-blonde nylon furleen is Astraka's jacket, with its flattering collar. Price about 19 gns., from Dickins and Jones; and Kendal Milne, Manchester. It is worn with Matita's oatmeal tweed dress, which has a short, matching fringed cape.

Elegant Economy

An all-the-day-through dress in grey worsted flannel, unbeatable for Spring. This trim, basic dress, designed by Charles Creed, and made by Chadwick and Hill, costs only £10, from D. H. Evans, London ; Jenner's, Edinburgh ; and Bealeson's, Bournemouth. The navy-and-white spotted foulard hat, a Hugh Beresford "Town and Country" model, costs 99s. 6d., from Bourne and Hollingsworth ; Joan, Manchester ; and Marshall and Snelgrove, Birmingham. The six-skin Ranch Mink tie comes from the National Fur Company.

A Dinner-Party at the Tate

MEMBERS of the Contemporary Arts Society and their friends were entertained with films on Henry Moore, Graham Sutherland and—most interesting of all—Van Meegeren, whose Vermeer forgeries caused such a scandal just after the war, when the Society held a dinner-party at the Tate Gallery on January 7th. The Van Meegeren film stole the show, so to speak. When it was over, I heard someone say: " Fancy them only catching him on the cobalt blue ! "

I said to Sir John Rothenstein, Director of the Tate, " I can't help admiring the man's nerve. Pity he died." He grinned at me: " Oh, it was high time—his work was going off ! "

The films were followed by a special preview of the Raoul Dufy exhibition. Unfortunately, Something Awful had happened to the heating system and we shivered our way around—the penalty paid for our preview: I 'm told things were back to normal the next day, for the private view! Among the stoics who forgot the temperature in the sheer pleasure of seeing so many fine Dufys gathered together I saw Lady Sempill, Sir Colin Anderson, who is Vice-Chairman of the Tate Trustees, with Lady Anderson, Mrs. Hugh Dalton, Lord Wilmot, Sir George Barnes and Sir John Conybeare.

I felt quite sorry for Sir John Rothenstein, who kept being greeted by people who positively insisted that he accompany them. I wandered around with writer

Lovely Greek singer Kitza Kazacos and her husband, Mr. Edward Spencer, were particularly entranced by Raoul Dufy's gay " On the Beach, 1906."

Felix Barker and his very attractive wife, and lovely Greek singer Kitza Kazacos, who was married on Christmas Eve to antiquarian Edward Spencer. Kitza, whose " special gimmick," as she calls it, is to sing in five languages, told me with justifiable pride that Eric Spear has just written a delightful little song for her, " So Young," and she will be singing it on TV shortly.

Sir John suggested that the Whistler Restaurant might be the best place to thaw out, so we wandered down. Vivacious Tondi Adams, who has been running the restaurant for two years now with great success, was resting in her first free moment after coping with more than 200 guests with all the warmth and personal attention of a private dinner-party. She avers that her life is never dull—restaurant frequenters vary from gallery visitors, themselves a big enough cross-section of the public, to local residents, artists and M.P.s from near-by Westminster.

Hearing that Kitza was from Greece, she promptly introduced her to young artist Denis Matthews, secretary of the C.A.S., who was filled with enthusiasm over his recent visit to Greece. They were soon deep in conversation, and gradually the rest of us stopped to listen to his brilliantly painted description of a visit to Mount Athos. On that peninsula, which can only be reached by sea and where the twenty or more monasteries are painted in gay ultramarines and oranges, dull reds and bright pinks, he travelled by mule and on foot over winding mountain paths, sketching as he went. He told of the seven-hour car ride from Salonika to Eirisos, the departure in a pink and pearly dawn for a five-hour sail by *caique* to the Mount. When he stopped, we told him he had " sold " us the place—we 'd all go. " Oh, women haven't been allowed there for over 1,500 years," he said.

" No women ! " we echoed sadly, and " No," he said. " That 's what one of the old monks told me: ' No women—or gross beasts ' ! "

O. S.

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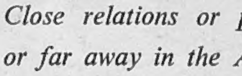

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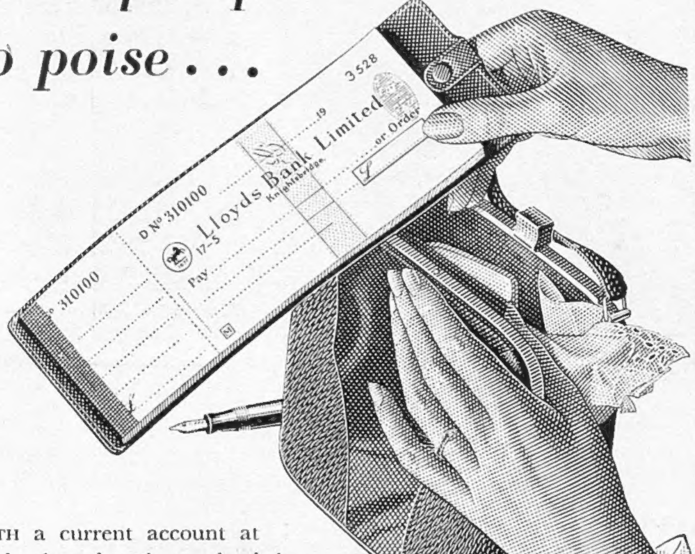

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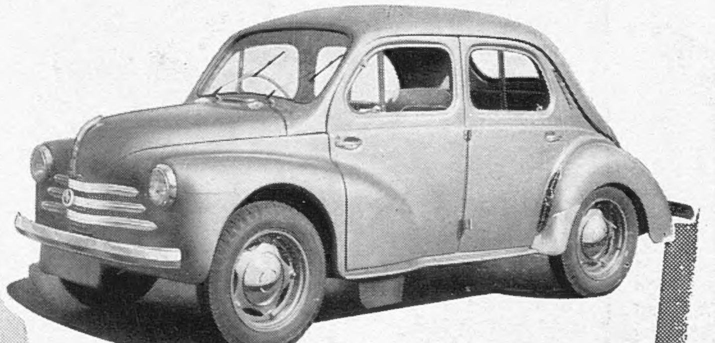

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